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THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ATTITUDES
OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD WOMEN
IN CHANGING JAPAN

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The Japanese Woman

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A Composite Picture Necessary

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INTRODUCTION

In Japanese Art and Literature the plum blossom symbolizes womanly virtues. While the snow still covers the tree, the plum blossom braves the cold winds. In January the perfume of springtime surprises the cold passer-by. The plum is the symbol of courage and bravery. In spite of its early appearance it is a modest flower; pure white with a heart of gold; symbol of purity and beauty. It blooms for many days and even after the flower has fallen the perfume lingers on. It is a fitting emblem of woman's patience, chastity, and humility.

The entire civilization of a country takes its leading, if not its dominant color, from the estimate held by the people as a whole on the value of human life. As we study the 2600 years of Japanese history, through periods of many different emphases, we are impressed with the slowness of the Japanese to give value to the human being. Those nations which insist on valuing human life only by the utilitarian measure always put women in a degraded place. Dr. Sidney Gulick in *The Evolution of the Japanese* says: "So far as I know, not among all the teachings of Confucius or Buddha was the supreme value of human life as such, once suggested, much less any adequate conception of the worth and nature of woman. The entire social order was

constructed without these two important truths".* She is just a nonentity, ignored as a part of the civilization. One writer has put it in this way, "The Japanese woman in Japan is neither non-existent nor overevident. She is not noticed nor despised. How she has escaped being lost is an Oriental puzzle." It is no puzzle to those who have lived in Japan. She hasn't been lost, because she has been the leavening element in the civilization. The ever increasingly strong Samurai virtues would have destroyed themselves and the men who followed them, had it not been for the balancing grace of Japanese womanhood. Even though Lafcadio Hearn may wax too eloquent on this subject, still there is much truth when in his "Japan An Interpretation" he says:

"The most aesthetic products of Japan are not its ivories, nor its bronzes, nor its swords, nor any of its marbles in metal or lacquer--but its women. Accepting as partly true the statement that woman everywhere is what man has made her, we might say that this statement is more true of the Japanese woman than of any other. Of course, it required thousands and thousands of years to make her; but the period of feudal integration beheld the work completed and perfected. Before her, criticism should hold its breath; for there is here no single fault save the fault of a moral charm unsuited to a world of selfishness and struggle. The Japanese woman is ethically a different being from the Japanese man. Perhaps no such type of woman will appear again in this world for a hundred thousand years: the conditions of industrial civilization will not admit of her existence. This type could not have been created in any society shaped on modern lines. Only a society in which all self-assertion was repressed, and self-sacrifice made a universal obligation--a society in which personality was clipped like a hedge, permitted to bud and bloom from within, never from without, could have produced it. It has no

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Gulick, Sidney, Evolution of the Japanese, p.112

more in common with this twentieth century of ours than has the life depicted upon old Greek vases. Its charm is the charm of a vanished world. Transplanted, it cannot be. The Japanese woman can be known only in her own country."*

Those who know Japanese women even today would agree with the poetical fancy of Hearn, but how mistaken he was when he thought that those qualities he so admired were not sufficient to meet even the crass industrial world which modern civilization has forced upon Japan. Striking is the heading of an article in the Survey Graphic of January, 1937, on the subject, "The Old-fashioned Girl of Modern Japan". Below the subject and above the text is this explanatory caption:

"A first-hand portrait of Miss Nippon, the girl behind the export statistics, whose transition from Medievalism, and what becomes of her in the process will measure the future of Industrial Japan".**

The American industrial expert who writes this article says:

"It is ironic that the least militant element of the Japanese population should be the aggressive weapon of industrial Japan. The little girl of the paper parasol is the strongest link in the chain of Japanese expansion. She has the feminine qualities that European leaders praise as they take their women out of industry to raise babies. The Japanese have worked it out better. The birthrate is so high that the Japanese can plausibly use the population pressure theory as one of the reasons for territorial expansion. To keep up this birthrate they do not need to take women out of industry. Japanese women produce cotton textiles at the rate of 2 3/4 billions and babies at the rate of 117 survivors per hour (a million born each year). In Japan is a machine age application of the most ancient

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Hearn, Lafcadio, Japan An Interpretation, p.393

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Survey Graphic, January 1937, The Old-fashioned Girl of Modern Japan, by Helen Mears

social pattern in the world. The women are workers and mothers, and their labors free men for heavy industry and the army."*

The Japanese Times says that "Japanese women are demanded and welcomed by their employers for their cheap labor, diligence and obedience". The article in the Graphic Survey above mentioned ends with this sentence from which the above caption was taken, "How rapidly the Japanese woman makes the transition from medievalism to Modernism and what becomes of her in the process may well measure the future of Japan and perhaps of the world". And so, in spite of all that Japanese authors, as well as Lafcadio Hearn, William E. Griffis, and many others, wrote and believed, the gentle retiring, graceful figure that seemed so unfitted for the modern world has demonstrated her utilitarian virtues as well as those of art and beauty.

What a gamut of attitudes and prognostications the Japanese woman has had to meet throughout the ages! Griffis says:

"The women of early centuries were, according to Japanese history, possessed of much more intellectual and physical vigor than now, filling the offices of state, religion and household honors, and approached the ideal cherished in those countries in which the relation of sexes is that of professed or real equality. Certain it is that in many instances Japanese women reached a high plane of social dignity and public honor, while in later ages the virtuous woman dwelt in seclusion; exemplars of ability were rare, and the courtesan became the most splendid type of womanhood."**

The Nara age, the Golden Age of Poetry, was called "The Woman's Era". Buddhism dominated this period, with its doctrines of gentleness and beauty. Beauty-loving Japan so

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Survey Graphic, January 1937, The Old-fashioned Girl of Modern Japan, by Helen Mears

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Griffis, W.E., The Mikado's Empire, p.75

responded to this appeal that the mints at last had to shut down, the stores of precious metals having been exhausted in the casting of images and bells, and in the decorations of pagodas and temples.

In the Fujiwara Period, says Scherer in "The Romance of Japan", "lords and ladies were all trained as poets. Men and women were almost equally educated and stood on terms of perfect social equality. Throughout all their strange lives, Fujiwara men and women worked on equal terms and indulged in romantic intercourse in marked contrast with the customs of later days."*

We pass into the period of the Tokugawa Feudalism in which ideals weaken individuality for the personal aggrandisement of one man. The family system moulded by Confucianism put women in the position of inconspicuous dependents. Here woman becomes absolutely inferior to man; shallow of mind, ignorant and sinful. She is the negative element like night and darkness. She should follow man with humility, and when she does do anything worthy to be praised, she should never be proud of it. She should allow herself no pleasures and refrain even from going to the shrines and temples and other crowded places before she is 40.

Because of these attitudes, Baroness Ishimoto says:

"Japanese women have cultivated the power of endurance to a remarkable degree. Their negative strength has been developed amazingly. For instance, the women of my class never betray their

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Scherer, James A.B., The Romance of Japan, p.54

agony at the moment of childbirth. At the moment of a great sorrow or mental shock they know how to control themselves and face the circumstances stoically. This is their great price of personal pride. This is now the national pride in them. However, these negative virtues of Japanese women have surely led men to extreme self-indulgence. It is through the everlasting patience of women in the presence of men's dissolute practices and unfair domestic conduct that perpetuates the Geisha system of Japan."*

Today, the Japanese woman whom the outside world visualizes is the entertaining courtesan of the beautiful gay kimono, the painted face and the flirting fan. Baroness Ishimoto resents the fact "Foreigners spend a few days in our country and, however crowded the schedule, they never seem to forget to exploit the gay quarters and set down in print their impressions". She resents the picture Count Hermann Keyserling has given to the world in his "Travel Diary of a Philosopher", and quotes him as saying:

"She cannot be taken seriously as a personality and to this extent those people are right who place her beneath the European woman. The Japanese lady whom I have in mind will also belong to the past ere long, just as the European grande dame does already. No aesthetically sensitive man will envisage this fate without melancholy. With her one of the sweetest charms on earth will pass away, and nothing of equal value will replace her soon, no matter how much effort is extended in this direction."**

Baroness Ishimoto writes after this quotation:

"Occidental men like to think that there is still some country where women do not argue but always gently obey. Indeed, it may be a pleasant relief for some of them to come to a country where mankind is still considered absolutely

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Ishimoto, Baroness Shidzue, Facing Two Ways, p.282

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Keyserling, Count Hermann, Travel Diary of a Philosopher, p.202

superior to womankind. This feminine type to which the Westerner completely lost his heart has likewise been the object of praise among Japanese. Our men explain: 'See how Westerners praise you! Don't lose your national pride! Do not be silly enough to imitate others and thus allow your virtue to degenerate!'

What then are the elements of this so-called perfect feminine quality which the German philosopher and other aesthetes, Occidental and Oriental, admire so much? The elements seem to be exquisite beauty and grace unconscious of themselves; the absence of pretense; naïvete, unselfishness. With this compound a woman becomes a doll. A living thing she has a heart--a delicate heart--but positively no soul! As heavy chains fasten prisoners in their cells, so the masterful pens of Westerners lauding Japanese women's doll-like feminine charms serve as bonds strengthening native weapons of control. Nevertheless, modern Japanese women are chafing at their jailers and saying that the praise of women devoid of personality is an intellectual and social disgrace."*

To understand this person presented simultaneously as an exquisite doll, a perfect wife and mother, an entertaining courtesan, an indefatigable worker and even the backbone of industrial Japan, one must study her life all the way through the 2600 years of change and note the attitudes that have moulded her character and made her what she is today. It is not strange that she is an enigma to the world that reads about her but seldom sees her. She is an enigma to her own people who want her to keep all the virtues and charms of the plum blossoms and yet with her dainty hands make 85 per cent of the exports from art objects to munitions. Even yet she is in the process of making. She has a training behind her more varied, more exacting than

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Ishimoto, Baroness Shidzue, *Facing Two Ways*, p.278

any woman in the world. There must be some common element or grace that will crown all these experiences and repay her for the ages of vicissitudes. We shall follow her through the periods of change that come with historical periods and psychological trends. We shall study the attitudes that have moulded her and have brought her to a type of womanhood combining the charm of the Heian court-lady, the selfless courage, the indefatigable, unselfish labor, the new mechanical ability, and the awakened personality that demands all the good gifts of God for herself and her daughters.

Not until one lives in Japan long enough to know her does the true Japanese woman reveal herself. Madame Butterfly and the Geisha girl tradition still furnish the illustrations, colored beautifully and in fascinating postures.

Mrs. Maki Hitotsuyanagi Vories says:

"Alack for us, women of clean and honorable training to have them taken as our representatives; our character is misrepresented. Many times in America I was met with an attitude on the part of American men as would be shameful to tell. Beneath the quiet reticence of the average Japanese women there are the hopes and desires of women of flesh, and above the uncontrolled gaiety of the girls of the present age, there is a torch of ideals to guide them and to restrain them just as with girls and women in other countries. Custom and history develop in the course of human life and are not God-given gifts; the common gift to men is not penetrable by man-made differences; generations of events will not change it. We do not want to be objects of pity or curiosity but to be known as normal human beings and to be introduced to the world as such."*

Women in Japan are today "facing two ways"--the past and the

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Vories, Mrs. Maki, The Japan Christian Movement of 1922, p.185

future--the old way and the new. Those who take up a new life, travel and study abroad, are overpowered, as Baroness Ishimoto says she was, by the consciousness of the relative poverty of Japan and wealth of America, by the larger opportunity in the west for women and by the fellowship of large numbers of highly educated and trained workers. But Japanese women must study their own history and realize the wealth of their own training and the assets of their own evolution. They have much in artistic feminine grace, in self-control and unselfish virtues, in ability to serve and to suffer and genius to rebuild that the whole world of women needs. Has Christianity the common touchstone that can weld all lines of experience of the Japanese woman and make her feel her close kinship to her friends in western lands?

An answer to all these questions in her mind and ours can come only after a study of the attitudes which have moulded the Japanese woman; only a composite picture of those processes can image her as she really is.

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN JAPANESE HISTORY

The Nihongi, one of the oldest of Japanese records of ancient traditions, completed in 720 A.D., begins with this sentence: "Of old when heaven and earth were not yet separated and the in (male, active, positive principle) and the yo (female, passive, negative principle) were not yet separated, chaos, enveloping all things like a fowl's egg, contained within it a germ. The clear and ethereal substance expanding became heaven; the heavy substance agglutinating became earth."* From the earth a germ sprouted and became a self-animate being, and the kami or deity was born. Many deities then appeared, but the first to be recorded as having sex distinctions were Izanagi (male) and Izanami (female). Standing together on the floating bridge of heaven Izanagi was playing in the waters with his sword, and, upon lifting it up, some drops fell which formed an island. The creative pair even in this early stage being filled with curiosity, stepped down onto the island, separated, and began a trip around to explore; the male going to the left and the female to the right. Eventually they met, and the female god spoke first and said, "How joyful to meet a lovely man." The male spirit was offended because the woman spoke first and insisted that they journey around once more. The female spirit was evidently duly impressed with the male's anger and when they met the second time repressed her tongue

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Griffis, W.E., The Mikado's Empire, p.44

and allowed the male spirit to cry out, "How joyful to meet a lovely lady." They were the first couple on the earth, and this was the beginning of the human race, according to Japanese tradition. One can go today to the island of Awaji, a beautiful wooded spot in full view from the shores of Kobe, and visit the Garden of Eden. This little island with seven large islands and thousands of little ones became the Yai Yihon Koku (The Country of Great Japan); the O Yashima no Kuni (The Country of the Eight Great Islands); the O Nogorojima (The Island of the Congealed Drops); Fuyohara Akitsu Kuni (The Country between Heaven and Earth).

In a study of the beginnings of attitudes toward women it is interesting to see that the male and female started equally; the woman was not taken from the rib of the man, as in the creation story so familiar to us. But, according to Japanese mythology, the female was "put in her place" on her first adventure. She, even the first woman, and a goddess, was supposed to speak only when spoken to.

However, the old records faithfully record that at Izanami's first conception the female essence was the more powerful, and a female child was born, greatly to the chagrin of the father who wanted a boy. The child was named Amaterasu no Mikoto (the heaven illuminating goddess). She lighted the heavens and the earth with her brightness. Her father transferred her to the heavens and gave her sway over the ethereal kingdom in the sky. She was the sun.

The second child was a female, also, Tsuki no Kami, and she was allowed to rule in the sky at night and became the Goddess of the Moon. The third child was a deformed male, unable to stand; so his parents made him a camphor-wood boat, and he became the God of the Sea. The fourth child was a son and of quite a different type from the other three children. He was an active, destructive fellow, annoying all the gods and goddesses. He grew very wicked, killing people, destroying fields, upsetting the waters and making storms. One day after his sister, the sun goddess, had planted a field of rice, he tore up the field and spoiled all her work. Another day she was sitting at her loom weaving when this wicked brother, Sosano, flayed a live horse and flung the bloody hide over the loom. The goddess was so frightened that she fell over the loom, hurting herself and, in her fear and despair, shut herself up in a cave nearby, sealing the entrance by a large rock. She, being the sun goddess, thus took all the light from the earth and the heavens, and there was no longer day and night, the confusion was like unto the chaos before creation, and all the gods and goddesses, now numbering about 800,000, gathered together to see what they could do about this tragic affair. They appointed a god who had a great reputation for wisdom, to think out a plan which would tempt the sun goddess to reappear. Wise indeed was his idea. He conceived of making a huge mirror and calling to her to peep out of her hiding place and see a goddess much more beautiful than herself. Evidently jealousy and curiosity were, even in

those first days, well-known as feminine characteristics. He also commanded the other goddesses to make the finest clothing and jewelry for her and to build a splendid palace for her use when she should come out. They also made her a necklace of curved jewels.

When all was ready they pulled up a sacred sasaki tree. They hung the necklace of jewels on the branches, also the fine garments and the mirror, but how could they get her to peep out?

Taxing their ingenuity again they appointed a goddess to arrange a dance to be performed in front of the cave. As she danced she blew on a "bamboo pipe with holes in it" (the first flute). Others clapped pieces of wood together to time the rhythm. Another god took six bowls and strung moss across them and made the koto (the first harp). A huge bonfire was built. They all danced and sang and shouted in vain, until the leader, possessed by the spirit of folly, sang a song which is now interpreted as relating the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 100, 1000. She loosened her dress as she became so excited and, when she exposed her nude charms, the gods laughed so noisily that the heavens were shaken and the sun goddess was no longer able to withstand her curiosity and opened the door slightly. She asked why Uzumi danced, and the goddess replied, "Because there is a deity out here who surpasses your glory." As she said this, another god held up the mirror, and the sun goddess stepped out a little further to see the image of her rival. The God of Invincible Strength reached in and pulled

her forth. They took her to her new palace and put a straw rope around her to protect her from any further troubles from mischievous gods.

There are whole volumes of stories gathered about the head of this first powerful female, and in the study of the life of women in Japan one cannot fail to see the great influence which this story has had and still does have on women in all walks of life. The dancing before the cave was the prototype of all the pantomimic dances seen in every Japanese village and city through all the ages, even today. The dancing girl, her long graceful sleeves and her fan are, more than Westerners can imagine, a central part in the life of the people. To this day when a Japanese woman is about to sweep or perform any household duties, she binds up her sleeves to her armpits with a string twisted around her shoulders like the sleeve binder of the dancing goddess. In the preparations made to entice the goddess from the cave, we see the origins of music, wind and string instruments, dancing, divination, adornment, weaving and carpentry. Before all sacred Shinto shrines the sasaki tree is planted, and at New Year's Time twisted ropes of rice straw are stretched before gates and doors to keep out evil spirits. Masks and pictures of the dancing girl, usume, adorn walls of homes and restaurants and bring a spirit of mirth. In the month of August, especially, but at almost any time, at fairs and festivals, every child carries a branch of a tree decorated with colored papers and trinkets, symbols of the jewels and presents which were given to the

sun goddess.

Very seriously, too, this tale is interpreted in the life of the people. Griffis says that, judged as a religious influence, these early stories may fairly be held responsible for the moral traits of their character, both bad and good. The Japanese mythology is the doctrinal basis of their ancient and indigenous religion called Kami no Michi, or Shinto, the way or doctrine of the gods, or, by literal meaning, theology. The mirror and the jewels (necklace) and the sword which the wicked brother took from the tail of a dragon are the three sacred national treasures which have since become the Imperial Insignia. Amaterasu, the sun goddess, particularly urged her grandchild to guard the mirror, saying, "My child, when thou lookest upon this mirror, let it be as if thou wert looking at me. Let it be with thee on thy couch and in thy hall, and let it be a holy mirror unto thee." This faithful grandson became the representative of heaven to govern Japan, and he was given these three sacred treasures to help him in the performance of his sacred duties. It was at this time that the floating bridge of heaven was withdrawn, and the earth finally separated from the skies. From the line of this grandson, Miniji, came the first Emperor of Japan, Jimmu Tenno.

In the reign of Shujin, 97-30 B.C., a period of religious feeling and worship is recorded, and the building of special shrines for the adoration of the gods date from this time. Before this the sacred ceremonies had been celebrated in the open

air. The three sacred treasures left by the sun goddess had been placed within the palace of the Mikado that it might be said that, where they were, dwelt the divine power. A rebellion broke out during this reign which was felt might be a mark of the disfavor of the gods, and in consequence of the Mikado's keeping the emblems under his own roof. Fearing that they might be defiled by being kept so close to his carnal body, he dedicated a temple to hold the treasures and appointed his own daughter priestess of the shrine and custodian of the sacred symbols; a custom which has continued to the present time. In view of the fact that later, after Buddhism came to Japan, the very presence of a woman was defiling, it is noticeable that in these early days, "in the shadow of history", a woman was appointed to protect and hold the most sacred objects in all Japan's history; the shrines of Uji in Ise since 4 A.D. have held these precious relics and are always in charge of a virgin priestess of Imperial blood. Copies of the mirror and sword were made and are kept at the palace in a separate building called The Place of Reverence.

THE POSITION OF JAPANESE WOMEN BEFORE
THE 6TH CENTURY

During this early period, up to the coming of Buddhism, women of the higher classes often reached a high plane of social dignity and public honor. Griffis points out that "In early Japan as in the Greece of Homer and the tragedians, women's abilities and possibilities far surpass those that were hers in the latter days of luxury and civilization". From early poems and the two historical annals, we learn something of the attitudes of men toward women. During this period the Emperor had his harem of many beautiful women. As early as in the days of Jimmu Tenno, one woman was chosen as wife or Empress, receiving first honors. Her children usually were heirs to the throne. In addition to his Empress, the Mikado had twelve concubines whose children were next in line to the throne. Just as a safeguard, four noble families were set apart from which an heir apparent or a husband for the Mikado's daughter might be chosen. Even in these earliest days there was nothing so important to the Japanese as that the Imperial line should not be broken.

The aborigines led an easy life; roamed about, hunted and fished for their food. Other races invaded the land, and from the very beginning practiced concubinage, which was practically polygamy, and they filled their harems with young native

females. The daughter of the conquered chief shared the couch of the conqueror, and the peasant girl became the wife of the soldier; making for that mixture of races which is so easily seen today in the various types of faces all over Japan.

Before the coming of Buddhism and Chinese philosophy, there was no code of morals, no system of doctrine. The living was simple to the extreme. Women worked along with men building oblong huts made by placing young trees upright into the ground with poles across to form a frame, fastened together by vines. Women plastered the walls with matted mud and grass and helped to thatch the roofs. The clothing was made from the skins of the animals which the men brought home or out of a rough woven grass stuff, or from bark and palm fiber, and some from asbestos, which is mentioned in the annals. The dress consisted of a long loose robe with a tied girdle, loin cloth and later, leggings and sandals of straw to protect the legs and feet. The hunter gradually became the farmer, along with his wife, sharing work and food alike. The invading tribes brought grain and vegetables. The women wove the clothing and the mats and in early records we find even hemp and cotton used in their handiwork.

There were no family names. The institution of marriage was similar to that among the North American Indians. Marriage between brothers and sisters was frequent and not to be condemned. Griffis says that "Children of the same father could marry, but children of the same mother were prohibited from

marrying". Chastity among the unmarried was not held a virtue. They treated their women with comparative kindness and respect. In the ancient literature we read of great feasts and drinking bouts, the women being included. To the average Japanese these days were rose-tinted by mythological and traditional stories, and throughout all the ages these have been skillfully told by the public professional story-tellers.

Shinto from its very beginnings expressed great detestation of uncleanness. Birth and death were the great polluting factors in life, and here the status of woman suffered from the earliest days. The corpse and the mother giving birth to a child were kept in huts quite apart from the home, and these defiled huts were afterwards burned. Because of this uncleanness, women were not allowed to climb sacred mountains or to enter holy places. Tourists to the sacred island of Miyajima, one of the five or six most famous spots in Japan because of its natural beauty, are surprised to hear that there has never been a death or a birth on this island. Women, cats, dogs, (any female) about to give birth are hurriedly taken off the island even today. Within the memory of the writer women were first allowed to climb Mt. Fuji and other sacred mountains, and for a long period this special concession was limited to foreign women.

Out of the fast growing population slowly arose families of nobility, and, with their superior abilities and advantages, there came about a division among women which has persisted

and widened down to modern times; two classes of women, the high and the low--the served and the serving. When education came, their status was leveled to form a third and middle class.

LADY TACHIBANA

Before Buddhism came and marked the period in which a new civilization began to flow in through China and Korea, we have records of only a few women.

The old Kojiki annals mention only a few women before the famous warrior Empress, Jingu Kogo. Among them is the story of Yamato Dake's wife, Tachibana hime (princess).

In the second century, Yamato Dake, called the "warlike", appeared. There are many thrilling stories of his reign, and of his hairbreadth escapes from dragons, beasts, warring tribes, and the elements. One time he stopped at the shrine of the Sun Goddess and obtained the sacred sword from the Princess and fought the Ainu and by the use of this wonderful sword became one of the greatest heroes of Japanese history. He was in a great storm one day when he realized that he was being punished by the sea god whom he had insulted by some disparaging remark about the narrowness of the strait. The only way to appease the god was to sacrifice some person by throwing him or her into the angry waves. In the boat with Dake was his wife, Tachibana hime. When the Mikado asked if there were someone who would sacrifice himself for the sake of all, without question she threw herself into the waves. The blinding tempest

made it impossible to rescue her, but through her sacrifice the storm soon ceased, the skies cleared, and the sea god was appeased. The legend mentions, however, that Lady Tachibana was drowned because she lacked faith in the gods to save her.

So from the earliest records we see women ready to count their lives as naught and willing to sacrifice themselves for their husbands or, in fact, for any men over them in authority. Life is of such little value and the individual so unimportant, except as a part of a system, that suicide among women not only dates back to the earliest days, but has continued through all the years, and even now in modern Japan is a force to be reckoned with.

Only yesterday in a world of unions and strikes a famous geisha committed hara-kiri on the path up to a famous temple near Osaka where a group of geisha were putting on a modern sit-down strike. This idea of women striking was very new in Japan, but, harking back to Kojiki days was the act of this courtesan who made the men coming to propose reconciliation terms, step over her dead body sacrificed as a protest against their greed and perfidy. Thousands of women commit suicide in Japan with a purpose; it is not done just from a nervous breakdown or a mental quirk, nor even as an uncontrollable act of sorrow, but as a premeditated act with a driving purpose, as in the case of Lady Tachibana, or as a protest against some uncontrollable condition, as in the case of the striking geisha. But suicide is such a prominent phase in the life of Japanese women that

it will be spoken of fully in a later treatment of social and religious attitudes. A short sentence in the account of the above story in The Mikado's Empire is very telling. We find "The sacrifice was accepted." The "sacrifice" has been accepted all the 1900 years since, and, just as Yamato Dake went on his way unperturbed, so has Japanese history gone on unperturbed at woman's sacrifice.

Personality was an unrecognized and unimportant, unethical idea even among men; who could dream of expecting such a recognition where women were concerned. But it may be that we do not read enough into the lines of the old Kojiki story. It does say that Yamato Dake stopped on the way home from his wars and invented the distich, the thirty-one syllable poem so popular in Japanese poetry. Some of these lines of poetry may have been full of a sorrow which was too manly to intrude itself into his warrior's life. The story relates that as he passed into Shinano Province and stood on that glorious mountain pass, the Usui Toge, ninety-five miles northwest of Tokyo, where is now the favorite summering place for foreigners in Japan, he looked across that magnificent flowering plane and as he gazed he murmured sadly, "Adzume, adzuma", (my wife, my wife), and that plane of Yedo is still called aduma. The impression should not be made that there is any lack of affection or appreciation in such an accepted sacrifice, but Japanese ethics even before Confucius controlled them, had demanded that personal relationships be as nothing compared to the good of the group or the further-

ance of the cause.

EMPRESS JINGO KOGO

(201-269 A.D.)

The most famous woman in all Japanese history is Jingo Kogo, the consort of the Mikado, Chuai. The capitol city at this time, for unknown reasons, had been moved from Yamato to the large adjoining island of Kyushu. Chuai is pictured in the records as a man of "perfect beauty and ten feet tall". But he was a musician and a dreamer and not interested in wars and conquest as, strange to say, his Empress was. Jingo Kogo seems to have been his superior in every way. "She was renowned for her beauty, piety, intelligence, energy and martial valor". She was not only very obedient to the gods, but they delighted to honor her by visions and special messages. She feared neither the waves of the sea, the arrows of the battlefield nor the difficulties that wait on all great enterprises. Great as she was in her own person, she is even greater in Japanese eyes as the mother of the "God of War".

In 193 A.D. a rebellion broke out in Kyushu, and the Mikado, heading his army, went to quell the insurrection. His Empress followed him by ship, putting in at a safe port near Shimo no seki. She was worshipping one day on one of the small islands which dot the beautiful inland sea when the gods spoke to her and asked her why they were so concerned about conquering the small island of Kyushu when a much larger, lovelier and more

productive country was to be found in a nearby country just across the straits, known as Korea. The gods told her how it abounded in gold and silver and every kind of treasure, and they assured her that if she would obey them they would assist her in taking possession of this country without bloodshed. She was to begin her conquest at once.

Jingo Kogo went to her husband, the Mikado, and told him of her vision, but he doubted her story and, climbing a high mountain, he looked over the sea, hoping for a possible glimpse of this land of her vision. But he could see nothing, so he descended and replied to her, "I have looked everywhere, but I could see no land. Is there a country in the sky? If not, you have deceived me". The gods then, according to the Kojiki, spoke through his wife and said, "When you doubt, you blaspheme, and you yourself shall not go thither, but your Empress, your wife, has conceived, and the child within her shall conquer the country". Shortly after this the Mikado died. Jingo Kogo suppressed the rebellion on the island with the help of Chu'ai's general, but she could not forget her vision, and she was filled with longing to subdue the glorious land across the straits. To be absolutely sure, she asked a further sign from the gods. She went to the shore, baited a hook with a grain of rice, and said, "Now, if a fish is caught, I shall know that I am to be successful in my adventure". A fish was immediately caught, and the Empress was encouraged, but still was afraid to start out on such a great adventure, so she asked for one more sign. She

went into the sea to bathe and said, "Now, if I am to go, may my hair be parted by the waves evenly on either side", and, again, the gods answered her, and her hair was parted.

Now, for the first time in Japanese history, 200 A.D., a fleet was fitted out for foreign service, and, under divine guidance, Japan embarked on her first sea expedition. The conquest was successful, and the Empress returned with eighteen ships filled with treasures. Any questions concerning the historicity of the records, or doubts as to the reality of these legends do not concern our theme. We have here a woman character, the like of which has not again appeared in Japanese annals, "nor", says Japanese history, "in the annals of any other country".

Just before starting on the trip she discovered that she was pregnant. Again the gods came to her aid and guided her in finding a stone which she placed in her girdle, which delayed her acouchement until she was again safely home. The Japanese histories express great pride in this, their first foreign adventure in ships, and from it came the well-known phrase, "The arms of Japan shine beyond the sea", which is repeated over and over again in poetry and ancient documents and even in many modern ones. However, true to all expressed attitudes toward women, even the honor of this exploit, led by this super-woman, is given to her unborn son on whom rested the Spirit of War. She is worshipped in many temples as the mother of Ojin who is deified as the God of War. Troops even today, sailing for China, before taking their departure, pay their vows and lay their votive

offerings before these shrines.

One historical record of Empress Jingo is still of great practical interest. Upon her return from Korea she made a very important change in the geographical division of the country. Up to this time, Japan was divided into thirty-two provinces, but Jingo Tenno (reigning sovereign) imitated the Korean arrangement and divided the empire into five home provinces and seven circuits, named for their direction from the capitol, such as the Tokaido, or eastern sea-circuit, the Hokurokudo, or northland circuit. The interesting fact is that these divisions have, with slight modifications, been kept down to the present day, and we might say with truth that Jingo Tenno "put herself on the map".

One of the favorite subjects of Japanese artists is to depict the Empress standing on the seashore in warrior's costume looking out at sea. Kneeling by her side is her snowy-boarded general in court costume holding her infant son. Jingu is the heroine in Japan, strange to say, not for girls but for boys, and in the collection of dolls displayed in Japanese homes on May 5th at the time of the boys' holiday festival, the image of Jingu Kogo is placed among the male and not among the female characters. Also, in the lists of Emperors and Empresses in the ancient history annals, Jingu Kogo is listed as a man. Girls and women have been expected to admire her and her warlike propinquities with reservations.

It is strange that history, instead of camouflaging her sex

to fit the attitudes, did not change her character from her warrior's mein. All the adventurous fighting spirit which she had and might have passed on in varying degrees to the advantage of her sex has been lost in the streams of repressed personality, so that a woman in Japan at anytime through the centuries, who might have reflected Jingo's spirit, would have been considered a monstrosity.

EMPRESS IWA
The Jealous Consort of Emperor Nintoku
(313-399 A.D.)

One bad characteristic which is always referred to when describing Japanese womanhood is jealousy. And even at this early period we have the record of a jealous Empress. Ojin, the war god, had three sons, and there was a long competition between them as to the succession, but the second son, Nintoku, finally took the throne and reigned ninety years. A very famous picture is that of Nintoku and his Empress, Iwa, standing on a veranda of their very simple palace in Maniwa (near Osaka) looking out over the city's roofs and chimneys and realizing that too many of his people are poor and starving. His heart was filled with pity, because he saw no smoke arising in the land, and that meant that none were cooking rice in their homes. He began the first recorded plan for social reform. Osaka, the modern city of chimneys, the prosperous Pittsburg of Japan, loves this picture, but sad to say, the Empress at his side is not a beloved heroine. She is an example to obstinate, jealous wives. The

Mikado's deceased brother, upon his death, had left him his wife and asked him to include her in his household as his second wife, telling him plainly of her weak points. The Mikado not only accepted her but became so devoted to her that the Empress withdrew from the palace in a rage. Intoku sent many messengers to beg her to return. One of the most dramatic stories in the Kojiki is the picture of one of these messengers crawling in the rain on his knees around the house trying to meet this angry woman. As he prostrated himself at the front door, she ran to the back of the house. When he crawled humbly to the back door, she ran to the front. All day and night he crept backward and forward, the water reaching up to his hips. The Kojiki records that he wore a red cord around his waist which faded in the water until his green suit was all striped with red. The handmaidens pleaded with her to see him, but she refused and never did return to her husband, so a year later the second wife, Princess Yata, became the Empress. That is a story repeated in countless homes in every age. The jealous wife is the theme of many fables and moral lessons, but the principle lesson which this historical tale bears to women is the uselessness of jealousy, and how much wiser it is to accept conditions as they are, rather than to lose the throne--how much wiser to be one of many than to have no husband, and by being obdurate and unlovable, give your place to the usurper. This is the ethics and religion by which women in Japan have been soothed ever since these early days.

NINE JAPANESE EMPRESSES

Nine sovereigns of Japan have been women. Three of them, Empress Suiko, 593-628 A.D., Empress Jito, 690-696 A.D., and Empress Gemmyo, 708-715 A.D. were concerned with the shaping of the first records and historical documents.

Women's Part in First National History Documents

The katari-be was a hereditary guild of raconteurs whose repertoires of recitation consisted of tales of great families, nobles and sovereigns which were passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. They were professional storytellers and singers, accompanying themselves on musical instruments. These katari-be were the holders of their country's annals until the sixth century of the Christian era. But late in the fourth and early in the fifth centuries the Japanese learned the art of writing, and, finding in China a national written history, they became ambitious to set down their achievements and glories. This was a very difficult thing, because the Japanese spoken language was phonetic and it was exceedingly difficult to apply phonetic sounds to ideographic script. It was not until the time of Empress Suiko that the history project took practical shape. Empress Suiko had in her court the great Prince Shotoku, and through him she ordered the compiling of the first Japanese history. It was commenced in

620 A.D., but there is no record of the date of its finish. There were several documents written, but in the year 645 A.D. the Soga chiefs, the custodians of the manuscripts, threw them into the fire on the eve of their own execution for treason. Only one, The Record of the Country, was saved, and it is believed that it was later incorporated in the Kojiki (the Records of Ancient Things).

The Emperor Temmu, thirty-seven years later, appointed a body of writers to look over the records, distinguish the true from the false and compile an authentic history. The Emperor ordered the chamberlain, Hiyede no Are, "a man who could repeat accurately anything that he heard once", to store his mind with the ancient facts as collected and expurgated by this appointed language committee. But, unfortunately for literature, the Emperor died just as this work was begun, and it was twenty-five years more before the empress Gemmyo, on September 18th, 711 A.D., ordered a scholar, Uno Yasumaro, to write down what Hiyede no Are should dictate to him. This took four months, and, on January 28th, 712 A.D., Yasumaro took the first written Japanese history called the Kojiki to the throne.

Empress Jito should have the glory of collecting much of this historical data, but it fell to Empress Gemmyo to have the honor of putting the material into form for the use of those few who could read. Also she added two skilled literateurs to Emperor Temmu's classical compilers, and they wrote the Nihongi, The Chronicles of Japan, which is dated 714 A.D., two years

later than the Kojiki. Also, in the year 713 A.D., Gemmyu ordered all the provinces to send to the court the geographical facts and features with all traditional and remarkable occurrences which they were able to collect. These records were called Fudoki, Records of Natural Features. They have been lost, but even today a few of these are still extant. It is a very interesting sidelight upon the status of woman that these three women played such a large part in the writing of the first Japanese books.

EMPRESS SUIKO

Empress Suiko owes much in her brilliant reign to her minister, the great Prince Shotoku. He was one of the greatest men in the annals of early Japan. He never became Emperor but as regent under Empress Suiko he wielded Imperial power. He was called the Constantine of Buddhism. "To his influence", says Brinkley, "more than to any other single factor may be ascribed the final adoption of Buddhism by Japan". He was a man of great mental powers, and the chronicles relate that he could hear the testimonies of ten men in a law suit and not confuse them. This was the man who was Empress Suiko's right hand, and however much ability she might have had, herself, she would have been overshadowed by this prince. All during her reign Shotoh Teishi made himself felt in every branch of learning, and under him Japan came to feel China to be her teacher. Architecture, literature, painting and sculpture, ceramics and all crafts were

taught under Chinese and Korean instructors. The temple of learning, the Horyuji, at Nara (which is still standing, the oldest wooden building in the world) was completed in the fourteenth year of Suiko's reign. In this famous old temple we may study the influence of Chinese, Indian and Greek art upon the Japanese. Upon the walls can still be deciphered the oldest painting in Japan, a dim mural painted by a Chinese artist under a Japanese name.

The chronicles tell us that while Empress Suiko occupied the throne, two schools of painting were established; great interest in art and ornamentation was everywhere prevalent. Records of the Suiko court record the great importance of hairdress and caps. Brinkley says, "In the year 611 A.D., when the Empress Suiko and her court went on a picnic, the color of the ministers' garments agreed with that of their official caps, and each wore hair ornaments which in the case of the highest functionaries were made of gold; in the case of the next two, of leopard's tails; and in the case of lower rank, of bird's tails". On a more ceremonious occasion when some Chinese envoys were received by the court, the chronicles state that the Japanese Princes and ministers "all wore gold hair ornaments, and their garments were of brocade, purple and embroidery with thin silk stuffs of various colors and patterns". In Empress Suiko's reign costumes became gorgeous as a result of the acceptance of Buddhism and direct relations with the Tang Dynasty in China. Music, too, was greatly changed, because

of Buddhist rites. The first foreign teacher of music was brought from Korea in 612 A.D., and a special building assigned to him where he might teach his pupils. Various privileges were given to the professors of this art; they were excused from official duties, and their occupation became hereditary. Wooden masks worn by dancers were introduced by this teacher, Minashi, and can still be seen in the Horyuji temple.

A charming description of the Empress and her ladies out on a picnic has come down in the Chronicles. They went medicine hunting in May. They wore gala costumes and went to hunt stags for the purpose of procuring the young antlers as well as deer fungus; the horns and the fungus being supposed to have medicinal properties. The same account gives the strange item of Empress Suiko and her ladies enjoying a game of football in the year 612 A.D.

To Empress Suiko is also given the honor of having built the famous torii (red lacquer gate) on the beautiful island of Miyajima near Hiroshima. This gate and Mt. Fuji are the two best known points of interest in both old and new Japan. Gowen tells us in his "Outline History of Japan" that Suiko "learned of the visit of three goddesses to Miyajima and they desired to have there a shrine, and so sent the Empress a crow with a twig of the sasaki (sacred evergreen tree). The Empress got to work and, lo, in time Miyajima with its majestic portal".*

Being a woman, Empress Suiko is seldom spoken of in connection with the reforms of this period, as she is overshadowed

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Gowen, Herbert H., An Outline History of Japan, p.86

by Prince Shotoku, the first great moral reformer, but we know that the Empress stood behind him in all his great Buddhist reforms and propaganda. Before she came to the throne, two great Buddhist temples had been built, and during her reign multitudes of men and women were added to the Buddhist faith. This period marks one of the three great waves of foreign civilization in Japan. There poured into the island a stream of artists, scholars and teachers of letters and sciences. It was, also, during her reign that the famous Jushichi Kempo, the seventeen-article constitution, compiled by Shotoku, was promulgated (604 A.D.). It is the first recorded written law in Japan and consists of maxims based on Buddhism and Confucianism.

At this time all public administrators vied with each other in erecting shrines, and in 605 A.D. we have a decree from Empress Suiko commanding the high officers of state to make sixteen-foot images of gold and copper. Buddhist festivals were instituted by her in 606 A.D.

One story of this reign gives us the leading figures for Buddhism at this time. Buddhism had become a great social power, and the large number of priests and nuns were independent of the rules and regulations agreed upon for the court officers and population at large. In 623 A.D. a priest killed his grandfather with an axe, and Empress Suiko was forced to face the first bad moral situation in the ranks of religion. She then established the system of bishops who were appointed from the priesthood to prescribe laws of conduct for the Buddhist clergy.

At this time there was a registration ordered of all the priesthood, and we find in 623 A.D. a record was submitted to Empress Suiko reporting 46 temples, 816 priests, 502 nuns. This record shows what a great patron of Buddhism and Buddhistic learning and reform Empress Suiko must have been.

It was during Empress Suiko's reign that, according to the Chronicles, "many persons from Korea came to settle in Japan". Japan was at this time virtually at war with Korea. In 600 A.D. the Empress sent a force of 10,000 men and reduced Korea to abject submission and a promise that she would abstain from all future hostilities. However, Korea did not keep her promises, and Suiko was forced to assemble another army of 25,000 men, and once again they crossed the straits to punish their neighbor. One interesting item in this report is that the wives accompanied their warrior husbands on these campaigns.

In 618 A.D. an envoy came over from Korea and brought the good news that a Chinese horde of 300,000 men had been driven back, and Japan had been saved a possible invasion. This envoy brought the first instruments of war ever mentioned in Japanese history along with two Chinese captives, a camel, a number of flutes, crossbows and catapults. During the entire reign of Suiko the thoroughfare between the two countries was the great avenue over which Chinese art and literature found their way into Japan. It was she who established the first foreign department of the Government. She established a foreign office in Kyushu to deal with Korean affairs.

During this reign China and Japan stood in the relation of teacher and student. Literature, ideographic script, calendar compiling, geography, architecture were carried on under Chinese and Korean instruction. The oldest ideograph carved in stone dates back to 696 A.D. on a stone in Iyo province, and the next oldest one on the back of an image at Koryuji. We have referred to the highly decorative aspects of Buddhism, appealing to the emotional side of woman's nature, and perhaps the greatest single contribution during Empress Buiko's reign was the great impetus which the spread of Buddhism received through her co-operation with Prince Shoto in spreading this religion all over Japan.

EMPRESS KOGYOKU

(642-645 A.D.)

Empress Buiko, the consort of Emperor Bidatsu, died in 628 A.D. after a very notable reign, and Prince Tama ascended the throne. He reigned twelve years, and when he died in 641 A.D. the scepter was placed in the hands of Emperor Bidatsu's great-granddaughter who became Empress Kogyoku. Her great prime minister was Emishi. One of the first acts of the Empress was to raise Emishi to a very high rank and, after him, his son, Iruka, held even greater power. One of the unjust acts of these powerful men was to demand forced labor from all the people of the great estate which belonged to Prince Shoto's family. We hear at this time of a very strong woman arising to protest.

This was Prince Shotoku's daughter who became an enemy to the court. Orders were issued to extirpate the whole Shotoku house. The head of this family was a remarkable man, and he said, "Is it only when one has conquered in battle that one is to be called a hero? Is he not also a hero who has made firm his country at the expense of his own life? I do not wish it to be said by after generations that for my sake anyone has mourned a loss of a father or a mother".* Following his example and that of Shotoku's daughter, the whole clan committed suicide. The Empress held her throne only three years during which time the court was thrown into disorder by the many intrigues of the prime minister and his son. Finally the Empress' own son attacked the prime minister's son, killed him and threw his corpse into the courtyard. Kogyoku was forced to abdicate in favor of her brother. For the first time in Japanese history the title, Empress Dowager, was conferred on Empress Kogyoku. This period was called the Daiku or Great Change.

Prince Naka, who had been compelled to step aside on account of his act in killing the prime minister's son, and to let his uncle ascend the throne, now became a great reformer along with Amatari, the first Fujiwara chief. Their ambition was to further the new civilization which was being copied from the Tang Dynasty in China. Their object was to abolish hereditary office-holders and bring all the people into direct obedience to the throne and establish the Imperial right of ownership of all the land throughout the Empire. A coronation ceremony of

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, p.147

unprecedented magnificence was their first dramatic step. They then assembled all the ministers under a patriarchal tree in the presence of the Emperor, Empress Dowager and Prince Imperial and made them all pronounce a solemn imprecation on rulers who were not true in their methods of government and on vassals who showed the least sign of treachery or disloyalty. They turned back to the old records of the Emperors of antiquity for the best methods of meeting the disgraceful conditions which had arisen in Empress Jito's court. The first experiment of appointing governors in place of hereditary officials was instituted. Also, for the first time there was adopted a box as a receptacle of complaints to the throne. Anyone could write a complaint and present it. The Emperor, himself, would open the box each morning. The whole nation was reclassified into free-men and bondmen, and now we have the first census. The system of taxation was completely changed, and many abuses of the court remedied. It is interesting to find that cemeteries were ordered to be constructed for the first time, and wives were not allowed to kill themselves in order to follow the dead. There was an edict, too, against strangling men and women for sacrifices. Empress Kogyoku, though only Dowager Empress, was the leading spirit in these reforms, and, in 655 A.D., after the death of Emperor Kotoku, she was raised to the throne a second time and reigned as Empress Saimei from 655-661 A.D., the first instance of a second accession in Japanese history. She reigned nearly seven years, and her second reign was notable especially

for her well-planned expedition against the Yemishi (early name for Ainu) and the Koreans. Again, we might wish that records were more gracious to a woman who was able to reign twice as Empress and to have such power in reforms in the interim as the first Empress Dowager. It is an interesting study to observe how many "first" things occurred in this Empress's reign.

EMPRESS JITO
(690-696 A.D.)

The Empress Jito, too, must have been a remarkable woman. She stood by her husband in the Omi Court and shared his administrative confidence and assisted in his military councils. When their son came to the throne in his 25th year, he quietly accepted his mother as advisor, and more. Some historians say that she directed the state affairs. The son died after a three year's reign, and, by the urgent request of the ministers of state, Jito finally became the reigning Empress. Besides being a person of great administrative ability, she was well-known as a poet and is honored by a place in the anthology, "Single Songs of 100 Poets".

Perhaps the most important legislation in her reign was concerning slavery. It was the practice at that time to pledge one's body for debt. After one had paid off his debt by servitude, he was often held for interest, but Jito ruled that this should not be allowed and that children of men serving for debt should be reckoned as free. She seems to have been deeply

interested in the social status of all her people. She allowed one of her rich nobles, Komaru, to free 600 of his personally owned slaves and commended him for his generosity. She decreed that slaves once freed could not be put back on the slave's register at the request of the subsequent lord. She enacted a law that prevailed for many years that slaves should wear black garments and freemen, yellow.

But the most important fact concerning Empress Jito is that it was she who instructed her local governors that one-fourth of the able-bodied men in each province should be trained in warlike exercises each year. "This was the beginning of conscription service in Japan".* It is indeed interesting that women leaders in peace movements must acknowledge that it was an Empress who inaugurated compulsory service. March 14th, 696 A.D. in the last year of her reign was made memorable in Japanese history by an event which caused the principle of primogeniture to receive official approval. This had far-reaching influences on the customs of the country. Six months later she abdicated the throne and at her death she received the posthumous title, Dajo Tenno (Great Superior).

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, p.174

EMPRESS GEMMYO

(708-715 A.D.)

Empress Gemmyo was the fourth daughter of the Emperor Tenchi! She was the wife of Prince Kusakabe. Their son, Mommu, became Emperor, and it was during his reign that we hear of the first formal declaration of the right of primogeniture in Japan. When Mommu died, he willed his throne to his mother in trust for his infant son. We could wish that the Empress, in her avid interest in writing the Chronicles (Nihongi), might have left fuller records of her own life. She must have been a remarkably able and active woman. It was in the second year of her reign that the court was moved to Nara, the first fixed capital. One building of the period, the Shoso-in, still stands and contains specimens of all the things used by the sovereigns of this era.

To Empress Gemmyo is also given the honor of introducing the custom of erecting monuments with inscriptions. When she died in 712 A.D., she willed that evergreen trees be planted on her grave and that a tablet be erected giving some of the facts of her reign. Some historians also claim that the wearing of special mourning garments was begun during her reign.

In the year of her accession copper was found in Musashi province, and this was so important that the Empress changed the name of the year to wado (refined copper). From this time

on, copper coins were minted and became the units of value in place of rice or cotton cloth. An edict made at this time, promoting economy, was accompanied by a decree bestowing rank on men who saved certain sums in coin. It was during Gemmyo's reign that official salaries were first paid in Wado sen. No district governor was considered competent until he had saved 6,000 sen (about \$60.00). Taxes were paid in copper coin. This was a period of very drastic changes, and it is interesting to find a woman on the throne during these seven years of change. We have spoken before of the fact that it was during her reign that the Chronicles of Japan (Nihongi) were published along with the Fudoki (Records of Natural Features).

In 715 A.D. she abdicated and gave her throne to her daughter, Gensho, who reigned the following eight years. This is the only instance of an Empress succeeding an Empress.

EMPRESS GENSHO

(715-723 A.D.)

Empress Gensho was the forty-fourth sovereign of Japan. We know little of her, but it is of note that the Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan, were published in 720 A.D., five years after she came to the throne. The Nihongi is written in Chinese and is a more polished production than the Kojiki.

EMPEROR KOKU

(749-788 A.D.)

EMPEROR SHOTOKU

(788-799 A.D.)

Emperor Genzo abdicated to Emperor Koku, who later became known as Shoku. He reigned for 24 years. His throne then passed to his daughter who became the ninth Empress of this period of 500 years in the early life of Japan. She is known as Empress Koken. The mother of the Empress had been the real power on the throne. She was famous for her beauty, her poetical ability and for her wonderful black hair which was so long that it trailed on the ground. She was an enthusiastic patron of Buddhism. She encouraged the people to believe that the Empress Koken was an incarnation of Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy. The Buddhist control of state offices at that time was especially scandalous. Koken forbade the taking of life in any form. The fishermen almost starved because of this edict. While she pretended piety, history has pointed a finger at her as the mistress of Fujiwara-no-Nakamaro, who was one of the bad influences in the court, and who had driven out all who had attempted to lift court life to a higher level. After four years, Empress Koken abdicated and became a nun. After she entered the cloister she transferred her affections to a priest of ill repute named Dokyo. The rejected Fujiwara made an unsuccessful revolt, and

he with his wife and children was beheaded. The nun turned on the Emperor, accused him of being implicated in these scandals and caused him to be exiled. Then she returned to the throne and took the name of Empress Shotoku. The wicked lover-priest reigned with her till her death when he received his just punishment in exile. This Empress was steeped in superstition and at one time kept 116 priests in her court for the sole purpose of driving out demons. There is little good that can be said of her. Perhaps she may be called a patroness of the arts in that the first well-defined block prints come from her reign. She is the only one of the nine Empresses to whom the women of Japan may not look back with pride.

THE NARA PERIOD

(710-794 A.D.)

Woman's Era

The Nara Age was the Golden Age of Poetry, and during this period the first national anthology was assembled, the Manyoshu, or "Garner of a Myriad Leaves", a collection of several thousand poems, many of them written by women. While little mention of women is made in this era, they must have been very active and influential since the period was known as the "Woman's Era".

It was a period of literary activity. In 712 A.D. in the reign of an Empress, the Kojiki was completed, and in 720 A.D., in the reign of another Empress, the Nihongi, as well as many other documents, was published.

It was a period of aesthetic activity also. One of Japan's greatest sculptors lived during the Empress Gensho's reign, and it was in 720 A.D. that the great Buddha at Nara was cast. This is the largest bronze statue ever cast and is a symbol of the desire of the Empress and her people to make Buddhism prevail in the land. Nara was the center of the movement, and during this period the most active devotees were the Empress and the ladies of the Court. These women had no idea what a changed life Buddhism was to bring to them! During these years, the first six sects of Japanese Buddhism originated and developed

in the myriads of temples which dotted the mountains in and around Nara and Kyoto. They taught "infinite negation and absolute nihilism and a complete indifference to mundane affairs". The teaching spread like wildfire; hundreds of women became nuns and teachers of the new religion, dedicating their daughters to the sacred dance and to misuse by the sacred priesthood.

In the middle of the 8th century the country was visited by a famine. Some were ready to blame the new religion and the women for this, but the clever priest and sculptor of the Great Daibutsu saved the situation by declaring that the sun goddess was merely an incarnation of the Buddha and that the same was true of all Shinto gods. To celebrate this reconciliation of Shinto and Buddhism, the Daibutsu was set up at Nara, the copper used for the body of the image representing the Shinto faith, and the gold that covered it typifying Buddhism.

One of the cleverest strokes made by Buddhism was the persuading of Emperors and Empresses to abdicate so that they might retire to the monasteries and develop a life of piety and prayer. By this means such ambitious lords as the Fujiwaras kept the administration in their power and cemented their positions by furnishing concubines and wives to the degenerate Emperors. Occasionally an Emperor of reviving strength strove to fight his way out of his weak and degrading condition. The last Emperor of this period was such an one, Emperor Kammu, who moved the capitol from Nara to Kyoto in an effort to break the chains of dissolute luxury, false pietism and underhanded Fujiwara

dominance.

Griffis describes the period in the following paragraphs:

"Not only did the female Mikados, while doing nobler things for humanity, make soft the life of effeminate men, but the abuse of what was possible under their reign introduced the original sin of weakness in Japanese life and literature. Into this hotbed of lovely feminine influences, many growths strange, odd, curious, became visible and were carefully reared, but the type of men cultivated was not that of the alert and strenuous sort. Neither was it of the finest fibre or the noblest ideal. Moreover, there was introduced into life at the seat of government that element of the Boudoir influence which blotted out the clear distinction between the Court and the Government. These influences continued to exist down through the years, until the Constitution of 1889 banished women forever from the Throne.

How curious the difference between the life in the capitol city and on the frontier! In the one was the luxurious art-loving circle of priests, scholars, public functionaries, cultivated and brilliant women who became the mothers of literature and the nurses of belles lettres, all headed by a Mikado becoming more and more a monk and vanishing by slow evolution into an invisible god. Outside the city royal there was little to satisfy the man of taste, while far away on the battleline was growing up a race of stalwart warriors. For a while, at first, those retiring from the world devoted themselves to religion, and their profession stood for reality, but it was not long before human nature asserted itself. Poverty, sacrifice, abstinence and purity there were at first, but all too soon retreat from the world came to mean lust, debauchery, hypocrisy and wire-pulling. With many a man and woman, in and out of rank, monkery meant deviltry, and nunhood the opposite of chastity. Polygamy being an institution Imperial as well as common, the Mikado's offspring became troublesomely numerous. How to provide for these princely idlers was a chronic problem. As long as the thoughts of these titled luminaries were absorbed in their pretty women, football,

poetry, art, or the luxury of the capitol, they did not prove troublesome. Except as centers of plots and the tolls of intrigue, they were harmless ciphers.*

Griffis says that the Emperor Saga had 50 such children.

A study of the period leaves one with the feeling that the term "Woman's Era" is a title of opprobrium and unjustly lays on women the onus of this weakest period of Japanese history.

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Griffis, W.E., The Japanese Nation in Evolution, p.170

THE HEIAN PERIOD
Fujiwara Bureaucracy

(794-1159 A.D.)

One of the most sharply defined periods in Japanese history is the period of 398 years separating the transfer of the capitol at Nara from the establishment of the capitol at Kamakura. It is called the Heian Era because Kyoto was named Heian-jo (Castle of Peace) soon after Kwammu came to the throne.

There were several reasons given for moving the capitol at this time. For one thing, the Buddhist priests in Nara completely ruled the court, and they often bullied the Japanese rulers into compliance with the ecclesiastical will. Nara was also felt to be too small for the extravagant ideas of the time.

The Fujiwara family had been in virtual power since 645 A.D. when the high-minded Kanateri laid the foundations of its greatness by his part in the reforms of that year. As the strong Emperors who helped in the great organization of the administration were succeeded by the weak ones, the Fujiwara clan tightened its hold on the government. The clan assumed few military positions, for these were still held as socially inferior, but held the chief governorships and the high positions at court. The theory of short tenure decree in the former Nara period was gradually set aside by them, and in time they filled the bureaucracy with their own members and made the offices hereditary. Most important of all, they saw to it that

the Emperor's consorts were all chosen from their own women, and that heirs to the throne were selected only from the sons of Fujiwara women. Kenneth Latourette says:

"Even today the Empress is one of this family, as have been almost all her predecessors for more than a thousand years. Members of the clan were finally appointed regent and in all but name became the rulers of the kingdom. As their position became more and more sacred, they saw to it that the occupants of the throne had less and less to say in matters of actual government. Finally, as soon as an Emperor reached an age at which he might conceivably assert himself, he was forced to take the vows of a Buddhist monk and retire to the cloister to make way for a minor who could offer no resistance to Fujiwara ambitions. There frequently were several such ex-Emperors living at one time."*

Some historians say that this was why Kwammu moved the court to Kyoto, hoping to get away from the luxury and royal impotence of the old capitol at Nara.

But the descendants of the great Kamatari could not be overpowered. Until the end of the 19th century they continued to hold their high offices when the government of the rising military class deposed them. We know little of the life of the peasant woman and the common class woman of this period, but the literature is a gala picture of the court ladies and their waiting maids.

The Heian epoch is the classical period, the Elizabethan era, the woman's era, in Japanese literature. The Nara period gave Japan the famous poetry anthology, the Manyo-shu, and the Heian period gave her the scarcely less celebrated Kokin-shu,

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Latourette, Kenneth S., The Development of Japan, p.39

an anthology of over 1100 poems, ancient and modern. One of the most famous of these poets is the woman, Ono-no-Komachi, "the great sad poetess whose life exemplifies the love and sorrows of that refined and voluptuous epoch".*

Chamberlain says that the prose writings of the Heian period leave the Nara far behind. "In fact", writes Clement, "by four literary classics, the Hokin-shu, the Tosa diary by Isu-rayuki, the Pillow Sketches, by Seishonagon, and the Genji Monogatari, by Lady Murasaki, rather than by political intrigues or nascent art or even Buddhist activity we should remember the Heian period.

The Tosa diary describing a trip made by the author, but written as a woman's diary, is said by Aston to be the best extant embodiment of uncontaminated Japanese speech. The Pillow Sketches are said to be one of the most polished literary sketches ever produced in Japan, and the Genji Monogatari, a peerless novel comparing well with Fielding and Richardson".**

The Lady Murasaki is interesting to us as the most famous of Japanese woman novelists. She was a member of the Fujiwara family, born in 978 A.D. She accompanied her father to Echizen when he was appointed governor, and in the year following married Fujiwara Nobutaka. In 1001 A.D. her husband died, and she retired to a Buddhist temple "where she laid sacriligious hands on the sutras in order to obtain her materials for her books. By way of penance she had to recopy all the sutras, no small task, when we remember that the novel extends to 4,234

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Clement, Ernest, Short History of Japan, p.39

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Ibid

pages in 54 books. One of the results of the writing of the Monogatari was that the classical form of writing of the Japanese language became fixed for the generations to come".*

The novel in Japanese is called Monogatari (Gossip Thing). They are mostly the work of women and are very verbose and sometimes rather unrestrained from the moral point of view. In Murasaki's novel we get an idea of the extravagance of the period. She writes of one of the Mikado's ladies:

"One had a little fault in the color combination at the wrist opening. When she went before the royal presence to fetch something, the nobles and high officials noticed it. Afterwards, Lady Saisho regretted it deeply. The beautiful shape of their hair tied with bands was like that of the Beauties in Chinese pictures. Lady Saemon held the king's sword. She wore a bluegreen patternless gown with a shaded train and floating bands and a belt of brocade dyed a dull red. Her outer robe was trimmed with five folds and was chrysanthemum-colored. Her figure and movement, when we caught a glimpse of it, was flower-like and dignified. Lady Ben-no-Naishi held the box of the king's seal. Her gown was grape-colored. Her hairbands were bluegreen".**

Much of this lavishness was taught by the Fujiwara family. It was of great magnificence, especially that of the Fujiwara Uchinar, who governed the country for 37 years as regent for three Emperors. He married his three daughters to Imperial Princes and became the grandfather of three Emperors. The Fujiwara loved splendor and luxury and encouraged the fine arts. They erected magnificent buildings. Women held as important a place at Court, at that time in Japan, as they did in European

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Gowen, Herbert H., An Outline History of Japan, p.128

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Gowen, Herbert H., An Outline History of Japan, p.130

society. Learned women and poetesses were no rarity at Court. Girls received an excellent education. "In an old satire of the day, Horikichiro-monogatari, the unknown author expresses the condition of things and scoffingly says that the men are women and the women, men".*

Beautiful gardens were laid out with fountains and ponds, and pretty country houses built. The Japanese kimono came into vogue. Formerly, the court ladies wore Chinese costumes.

The court nobility gave themselves over to writing poetic couplets, to flower festivals, love intrigues, gambling and the refinements of a beauty-loving but sensual existence. Exquisite fabrics were produced for the kimono. Fine paintings and carvings appeared. Music was perfected. The position of dancing girls arose to the dignity of a profession. Festivals for viewing the flowers, for gazing at the newly fallen snow, for enjoying the moonlight were introduced. Great sums of money were spent on Buddhist temples. Huge costly metal images became the rage. As the effeminacy and moral degradation of the Court increased, its devotion to religious exercises was intensified.

"A Buddhist monk became the paramour of the Empress."**

Brinkley describes the manners and customs of the Heian period in such lines as these:

If the men of the period were effeminate and emotional, the women seemed to have sunk to a lower stage of morals than in any other era, and sexual morality and wifely fidelity to have been abnormally bad and lightly esteemed. The Fujiwara, working for the control of the throne through

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Saito, History of Japan, p.66

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Latourette, Kenneth S., The Development of Japan, p.41

Imperial consorts, induced, even forced the Emperors to set a bad example in such matters. But over all this vice there was a veneer of elaborate etiquette. Aristocratic women, though notoriously unfaithful, kept up a show of modesty, covering their faces in public, refusing to speak to a stranger, going abroad in closed carriages and talking to men with their faces hid by a fan, a screen or a sliding door; degrees of intimacy were nicely adjusted to the rank and station of the person addressed. Love-making and wooing were governed by a strict and conventional etiquette and an interchange of letters of a very literary and artificial type and of poems usually took the place of personal meetings. Indeed, literary skill and appreciation of Chinese poetry and art were the main things sought in a wife.

The Emperor Kodo and other Emperors in the first half of the Heian period gave splendid verse-making parties, when the palace was richly decorated with beautiful flowers. In the earlier part of the period, the gentlemen and ladies sat on opposite sides of the room. Later in the epoch the composition of love letters was a favorite competition, and although canons of elegant phraseology were implicitly followed, the actual contents of these fictitious letters passed back and forth were frankly indecent.*

Another rage was keeping animals as pets, especially cats and dogs. Kittens born at the palace at the close of the tenth century were treated with consideration comparable to that bestowed on Imperial infants. To the cat mother the courtiers sent the ceremonial presents after childbirth, and one of the ladies-in-waiting was honored by an appointment as guardian to the young kittens.**

Women at Court and the court dandies who imitated them painted artificial eyebrows high on the forehead, shaving or plucking out the real brows, powdered and rouged their faces and stained their teeth black. They wore their hair, if possible, so that it trailed below their elaborate skirts. Women's dress was not merely baggy, but voluminous. At a palace fete in 1117 A.D. the extreme of elegance was reached

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, p.270

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Ibid

by ladies, each wearing a score or so of different colored robes. In this period the use of costly and gorgeous brocades and silks with beautiful patterns and splendid embroideries began. Their toilet cases were so large as to be carried by two men on their shoulders when travelling--scores of boxes made of gold lacquer, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, held rich powders and rouges.*

The period was a long one, a fact which was due solely to the location of the capitol at Kyoto. The artificial manners and customs of the Court were due largely to the influence of the Chinese Court and Chinese literature. The tests of social standing for both men and women were skill in poetry, music, dancing, calligraphy and taste in landscape gardening. But in the provinces conditions were very different. We find in the Diary, "A Journey from Tosa", that it took one hundred days for the governor to travel to the capitol. Thus the literature and laws governing the Court were for the most part a sealed book to the country people. "The pageant of metropolitan civilization and magnificence never presented itself to provincial eyes."** The Fujiwara kept in close alliance with the priests, and they controlled the Throne through consorts and kept the people in check through the priests and superstition.

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, p.279

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, p.251

THE RISE OF THE MILITARY POWER
(1159-1603 A.D.)

THE BUSHI (Warriors)

The Court and the Fujiwara family gradually lost control of the provinces and even of the districts around Kyoto. Taxes to pay for the luxurious life of the Court and especially of the Buddhist church bled the people to extreme poverty and rebellion. Many nobles refused to pay their taxes, and many great estates became like independent colonies, virtually free from the Imperial or Fujiwara control. This led to the formation of feudalism. The nation was pushing its frontiers farther and farther to the north and west. These new lands were held in perpetuity and eventually formed the larger part of the Empire. Besides these, individuals were given huge holdings as a reward for meritorious service or special influence at Court; other large tracts were given to the monasteries and temples. They were exempt from taxes and control of the capitol. A governor often found that only about one per cent of his province was really subject to him, and so he would just remain in Kyoto and not even visit his province. Finally, the majority of the land-owners were bound to a central power only in form. They levied their own taxes and quarrelled with each other.

By the end of the 11th century, the central government was ready to collapse. While the Fujiwara family had contented themselves with court positions, the warrior families had been

strengthening themselves, and a military class was appearing. The proprietors of independent estates were dependent on their retainers for protection against their neighbors. Some of these men became professional warriors and gathered about themselves men from the police, their fellow retainers and adventurous fellows seeking a career. A new nobility sprang up amongst these military leaders. Many of them were members of the Imperial family who had gone out to seek their fortunes or had hidden themselves for some reason away from Kyoto. These estates were far from the Heian effeminate Court, and the men were inured to hardships, loyal to their officers and looked with disdain on the weak Court.

As the Fujiwara family and the Court grew weaker, the military chiefs began to struggle for the control of the government. Strange to say, also, the Buddhist monasteries had armed themselves, and many monks became warrior monks. These monasteries often housed thousands of trained fighters and became as well the abode of desperadoes who terrorized the Court. The monastery at Hieizan for years terrorized the Kyoto Court until it called in the military chiefs of the provinces to restore peace.

The Taira and the Minamoto families were the two greatest warrior groups, and they quickly responded to Kyoto's call, put down the Hieizan warrior monks and burned over 500 temples. About this time rivalries in the Fujiwara ranks led to civil strife, and the Taira and Minamoto legions had to interfere in

civil affairs. Finally, the two groups fell to fighting each other for military dominance in the capitol and for control of the person of the Emperor. They did not seek the Throne or even the offices held by the Fujiwara, but they did gain the real control of the government.

This is known as the Gempei era, 1159-1199 A.D., and we have about 50 years of civil war. The Taira family were first victorious. Their leader, Kiyomori, became prime minister and the real ruler of Japan. During this period the lives of women changed in an almost overnight kaleidoscopic manner. There was a reversion to the conditions prevalent at the time of the Yamato Conquest. It was a substitution of native civilization for foreign. The exotic growth of Chinese education, custom and culture had not spread far from Kyoto and was despised by these warriors. The earliest type of the Yamato race had been military, and from this Gempei period the Bushi became the masters of Japan, and it is their descendants who even today rule Japan and have led her into the world of China.

From this period loyalty to the Throne took precedence over every moral obligation. Parent and wife and child must be forgotten when duty called. A strict elaborate code replaced all principles of ethics or religion. One of the chief characteristics of a Bushi was what Brinkley called the "immobility of the heart".

With the beginning of the 13th century the reformed Buddhists, the Zen sect, "taught all believers to divest themselves

wholly of passion and emotion and to educate the mind unmoved by environment. The crown of all qualities was self-respect".*

"The great defect of this highly organized system was the indifference to the rights of the individual. Bushido taught a vassal to sacrifice his own interests and his life on the altar of loyalty, but it did not teach a ruler to recognize and respect the rights of the ruled. It taught a wife to efface herself for her husband's sake, but it did not teach a husband any corresponding obligation to the wife. It expounded the relation of the whole to its parts but left unexpounded the relation of the parts to one another. It produced an excessive reverence for rank and a rigid exclusiveness of class. There was no way for the commoner to ascend into the circle of the Samurai. So gifted men of the despised grades sought in the cloister an arena for the exercise of their talents. The Bushi received no recruits; the commoners lost their best elements; Buddhism became a stage for secular ambition. It cannot be doubted that Bushido checked the development of the nation by closing the door of rank in the face of merit. There came with this utter indifference to intellectual investigation. Had not Chinese conservatism been imported into Japan and received the homage of the Bushi, independent development of original Japanese thought and of intelligent investigation might have distinguished the Yamato race".**

It is easy to see in the light of such a changed civilization how woman's place would sink to that of a mere helpmate for her warrior husband. The work of the women of the feudal classes, while unspectacular, was noble and far-reaching. The wife, by her intense loyalty and self-effacement, inspired her husband to maintain his ideals and to preserve toward his lord something of the same attitude as she showed to her master. The wife was abjectly subordinated to her husband. Absolute

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, . . .

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Brinkley, Frank, A History of the Japanese People, . . .

obedience, self-effacement and fidelity were required of her, and yet her husband might be unfaithful and divorce her almost at will. Within her sphere she might be greatly honored, but she was always subject to her lord; no matter what it might mean to her, the family must be continued by male heirs.

The wife of the Samurai was influenced by Bushido. She must hide all traces of suffering or grief. She was taught to end her life with decorum in case the occasion seemed to demand it. By her example she exercised a profound influence over her husband. The lower orders of society, both men and women, copied as far as possible the ethics, as well as the manners, of the warrior.

Even in times of peace the Samurai never appeared out of doors without wearing his two swords in his girdle. Within doors were all the armour kept in glittering state by the women. "Over the sliding doors, on racks, were the long halberds, which the women of the house were trained to use in case of attack during the absence of the men."*

Feudalism was the mother of brawls innumerable and feuds between families and clans continually existed. The wife whose husband was slain by the grudge bearer brought up her sons religiously to avenge their father's death. This act of avenging was unhindered by law and applauded by society. The moment of revenge selected was usually that of the victim's proudest triumph. After promotion to office, or at his marriage ceremony, the sword of the avenger did its bloody work. Many a bride found herself a widow on her wedding night. In no country has the sword been made such an object of honor as in Japan. Women wore short swords when traveling, and the palace ladies in times of fires armed themselves.**

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Griffis, W.E., The Mikado's Empire, p.272

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Ibid, p.224

The vast majority of the military men were Buddhists. Each had his patron saint. While he was away fighting, the wife and children prayed at the temple for the safety of the father or relatives, and after their death, the happiness of the warrior's soul in the next world was secured by the prayers of the wife and children. Women in these troublous times became very pious and spent much time teaching their children to be pious and brave.

During the early feudal period there are stories of three famous women--wives of Samurai who proved themselves true Samurai women. Griffis points out that, next to portraying the beauties of nature, Japanese artists delight in portraying historical events, and there are none treated with more frequency than the story of the flight of Yoshitomo's concubine.

Tokiwa Gozen

In Kyoto in 1159 A.D. in one of the many battles between a Taira and the Minamoto clans, the chief of the Minamotos was killed. After the death of her lord, Tokiwa Gozen, a concubine of Yoshitomo, the dead chief, had to flee with their two children, because Kiyomori, the Taira chief, had sworn that he would exterminate the whole family. She hid herself and three children in a quiet country place. But the relentless Kiyomori conceived a cruel plan to discover her whereabouts. He ordered her mother to be brought before him and threatened to kill her by slow torture if she did not reveal her daughter's hiding place. Tokiwa Gozen was greatly troubled when she heard this, and, unable to

endure the thought of her mother's suffering, she started for the capitol with her three children. There she made an agonized appeal for mercy from Kiyomori. He was filled with admiration for her filial piety and was so struck with her rare beauty that he promised to spare the life of her mother and her children on the condition that she would become his wife. After a great struggle with her own feelings, she finally consented to marry him for the sake of her mother and children, but she never let her son, Yoshitsune, forget his father or his father's clan.*

Yoshitsune's Wife--Shizuka

Another famous story is of the wife of Yoshitsune, the baby in the former story. Yoshitsune's brother, Yoritomo, was the Shogun, and his wife was a beautiful girl named Shizuka. She was a very skillful dancer. Yoritomo and Yoshitsune had quarrelled, and Yoshitsune had been obliged to flee to the north to save his life. Yoritomo heard of Shizuka's fame as a dancer and asked her to give a dance recital on the famous stage in the Hachiman temple. Shizuka was obliged to obey the slightest wish of the feudal lord, though in this case she was most reluctant to do so.

Hundreds of daimyos and other nobles were invited to see the dances. Shizuka faced the audience and began her famous dance. At the same time, she sang two songs which she had composed herself, yearning for her beloved husband from whom she had been cruelly separated by the Shogun. This made Yoritomo

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Stephenson and Asano, Famous People of Japan, p.58

very angry, and he took it as an insult that she should sing in public about his traitorous brother, but Yoritomo's wife, Masako, sympathized with Shizuka, and appeased the anger of Yoritomo who secretly admired her for her faithful love and courage. Afterwards, the Shogun sent her many beautiful presents. Some of the most famous old pictures in Japan portray this dance, and the story furnished a theme for many dramas and Nō plays.

Masako

The most famous character of this story, however, is Masako, the wife of the Shogun. This is one of the famous love stories of Japan. The story of Masako is told in pictures and on the stage, and she is held before Japanese women as an example of a perfect wife and mother.

Yoritomo was in exile, banished to the province of Idzu by Kiyomori, the Taira chief, his stepfather. He wished to marry one of the daughters of Hojo Take Masa, a man in whose veins ran Imperial blood. He sent his faithful servant to decide which one of the daughters he should choose. He received the answer that the eldest was noted for her personal charms, but the second daughter, the child of a second wife, was very homely. Yoritomo thought he would cause the least family trouble by choosing the homely girl, and so he sent her a letter by his servant. However, the servant, thinking it too bad for so fine a master to marry a second-rate wife, destroyed the love letter and wrote another to the beautiful girl, Masako, asking her for her hand.

It turned out to be a true love match, and they were secretly married. The father, knowing nothing of this, promised Masako's hand to the governor of Izu province. Now the poor girl was in a terrible dilemma. She could not leave her husband whom she loved, and she could not refuse to marry the governor and thus ruin her whole family, so her father married her to Kanetaka, but on the wedding night she managed to escape and concealed herself in a place known only to Yoritomo. The father professed to be very angry with his true son-in-law, but he really admired him and later fulfilled a solemn oath to help him and the Hojo family which subsequently rose to be one of the famous families in Japan.

Masako was a wonderful wife and gave Yoritomo two sons and two daughters and contributed much to her husband's success and the splendor of the Kamakura Court. When Yoritomo died in 1199 A.D. she became a nun and shaved her head, but she kept her hands on the Shogunate for her two sons, and because she was the real power behind the government all these years, she was called Ama-Shogun, the Nun-Shogun. During those years there was unbroken peace, for the government at Kamakura was so just and strong that none dare oppose it.

Tomoye

Another famous woman of this period was Tomoye, Yoritomo's Uncle Yoshinaka's concubine.

Yoshinaka had been sent from Kamakura to head a siege of

the city of Kyoto. His real wife was Lady Fujiwara, a daughter of a court noble. As his troops were nearing Kyoto, he passed his wife's house and stopped to see her. He stayed much longer than he should have done, during which time two of his Samurai committed suicide at the gates to call him to his duties. He appreciated this and, cutting his visit short, hurried to the palace, where he attempted to capture the cloistered Emperor, but he was repulsed by Yoshitsune, the young brother of Yorito-mo. He attempted to flee, but his horse fell, and he was killed. Kanehira, his faithful vassal who was with him then killed himself beside his lord.

Now, Kanehira's sister was a concubine of Yoshinaka, and being a very strong and brave woman, she had dressed in armour and fought with her lord in many a battle, and she was with him in this last battle. After his death, she took off her armour, found her way by secret paths to Echigo where she became a nun. She shaved her head and spent the remainder of her life praying for the eternal happiness of her husband.

Tokiko--the Nii-no-Ama

The Heike Monogatari gives us another story of a group of brave women. The Taira now tried to regain their lost power. After many sieges and battles, both families prepared for a final great contest. They decided to meet on the water, and both sides prepared a fleet of junks. The Taira clan were pursued by the Minamoto and driven to the seashore. They had over 500 small vessels, and in them, along with the warriors, were their wives and children, their aged fathers and mothers, and many court

ladies looking sadly out of place in their silken robes. Among this group of women was a nun, the widow of Kiyomori, and the Empress Dowager with the dethroned Mikado, a boy of six years.

The Taira were defeated and, resolving not to be captured, the nun, with her royal grandson in her arms, leaped into the sea. She had put the sacred jewel under her arm and the sacred sword in her girdle, but she and the child were drowned. One of the most terrific massacres of Japanese history ensued. Nobles and peasants, mothers and children perished by the hundreds. A few of them escaped and hid in the high mountains of Kyushu. Griffis tells us that of the women spared in the massacre, some married their conquerors, some killed themselves and others kept life in their defiled bodies by plying the trade in which beauty ever finds ready customers. All courtesans in Shimonoseki for centuries after were said to have been descended from the Taira clans and were accorded special privileges.

On a ledge in the rock in the Shimonoseki Strait is a monument in honor of the young Emperor and his brave grandmother, Tokiko--the Nii-no-Ama--the noble nun of the second rank.

A paragraph from the Heiki Monogatari gives the pathetic story of this famous grandmother who was one of the most loved of all Japan's famous women.

Then the Nii Dono, who had already resolved what she would do, donning a double outer dress of dark grey mourning color, and tucking up the long skirts of her glossy silk hakama, put the Sacred Jewel under her arm and the Sacred Sword in her girdle, and taking the Emperor into her arms, spoke thus;

"Though I am but a woman, I will not fall into the hands of the foe but will accompany our Sovereign Lord. Let those of you who will follow me." And she glided softly to the gunwale of the vessel. With a look of surprise the boy inquired of the Nii Dono: "Where is it you're going to take me, Amaze?" Turning to her youthful Sovereign, with tears streaming down her cheeks, she answered: "There is a pure land of happiness beneath the waves, another capitol where no sorrow is. Thither it is that I am taking our Lord." And thus comforting him and binding his long hair up in his dove-colored robe, blinded with tears, the child Sovereign put his beautiful little hands together and turned first to the East to say farewell to the diety of Ise and to Sho-Hachimangu, and then to the West and repeated the Nembutsu, after which the Nii Dono, holding him tightly in her arms and saying consolingly: "In the depths of the ocean we have a capitol," sank with him at last beneath the waves. Ah, the pity of it, that the gust of the spring wind of impermanence should so suddenly sweep away his flower form.*

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Gowen, Herbert H., An Outline History of Japan, p.140

THE AWAKENING OF JAPAN

THE TOKUGAWA PERIOD

The Cabinet and Boudoir Ladies*

Okakura Kazuko has so vividly described the influence of women during the Tokugawa period, that a resume of his chapter called "The Cabinet and the Boudoir" will be the best way to realize the extent of their power at this time.

The appearance of the American warships in the Bay of Yedo was a mighty shock. Hitherto, the alarms of foreign attacks had meant little to the country at large, but now within a day's march of the city of Yedo lay the black hulks of a formidable fleet whose Admiral refused to retire until a treaty was signed. Buddhists wore away rosaries in praying to the gods for safety. The Shinto priests fasted while they called on the sea and the tempest to destroy the invader.

Custom and formalism were forgotten in this hour of common danger, and for the first time in 200 years the Daimyos (Feudal Lords) were asked by the Tokugawa government to deliberate over a matter of state. For the first time in seven centuries the Shogun sent a special envoy to the Mikado to consult about the policy of the Empire, and for the first time in the history of the Japanese nation the high and low alike were invited to offer suggestions as to what steps should be taken for the protection of the ancestral land.

Just at this time, had it not been for the timely arrival of the American Embassy, Japan might have entered into an internal

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Okakura, Kazuko, The Awakening of Japan, Resume of Chapter VI,
p.113

discord--a civil war--far worse than that which preceded the Restoration of 1868. The immediate effect of the coming of the American Embassy was to reconsolidate the fast waning power of the Tokugawa government. It was given a new lease on life, and its final overthrow was postponed.

Had the Tokugawas better understood their own position, they might, under this new condition of affairs, have retained their power for an indefinite period, but, unfortunately for them, there developed out of the rivalry of the Cabinet and the Boudoir an element of discord which brought about the ultimate downfall of the entire Tokugawa system.

It is indeed a surprise to hear one of the best known writers in Japan not only acknowledging the great influence of women in this period, but even giving them the credit for causing those conditions which resulted in the Restoration and the New Japan.

Okakura explains it as follows:

Like all Eastern monarchies, the Tokugawa Shogunate led a twofold existence, that of the outer ministry and that of the inner household. Of these two modes of expression, the former exhibits the sovereign as one who represents the united political wisdom of the country handed down through the long succession of experiences, and the latter as an autocrat whose will is law. The ideal ruler who stopped in the midst of a banquet to listen to the grievances of his people and preferred the discourse of soured visaged councilors to the sweet music of the Court beauties confined himself exclusively to the first role. But even in Confucian lands human nature is weak. The fortunes of a dynasty have often fluctuated with the adherence of its representatives to one or the other of these policies, and it is a significant fact that in Chinese history we find the preponderance of the household

influence always resulting in rebellion, whereas that of the Cabinet is overthrown only by the aggression of some foreign power. In more recent days a sort of compromise has generally been affected between these influences, virtually creating a twofold expression of the sovereign will. This has occasioned many awkward complications, especially where diplomatic relations with foreign nations have been concerned; the Household may deny what the Cabinet has affirmed, and vice versa.

Under the Tokugawa Shogunate there was constant friction between the Cabinet and the Boudoir. The ministers chosen from among the ablest representatives of the people, were for the most part statesmen who understood the spirit of the nation and never outraged the feeling of the public.

Through them, the Shogun, even if personally weak, generally commanded the respect of his subjects. When, however, the Shogun fell under the influence of the Boudoir, he became the hated despot who, regardless of public opinion, passed measures inimical to the national welfare. Unfortunately, in these cases, the Cabinet made but slight protest, for the Code of the Samurai forbade resistance to the will of the Overlord.

The ladies of the Yedo Court had been active participators in the Tokugawa rule, even in the time of Iyeyasu, who found among them many trusted friends and able councilors. It formed a part of his system to send them on secret and delicate missions, and they had come to be a well-recognized power in the government of his successors. In the case of a Shogun at all inclined to be autocratic, the ladies surrounding his private life exerted an immense influence, either in the person of his mother, his wife, his nurse or his favorite; they so constantly influenced his feelings and sought to mold his actions that he needed to be a man of very

strong character to remain untrammelled by these silken bonds.

They possessed a hereditary policy of their own which, based on woman's instinct of conservatism and hatred of compromise, was the dread of all Cabinet ministers who attempted reform. Their interference was not like the temporary meddling of a Madame Pompadour or a Duchess de Montespan, but that of a whole line of female Cardinals. It was owing to the antagonism of the Boudoir that the Tokugawa statesman, Rakuo, failed to accomplish his proposed reorganization of local government. It was through them that Mizuno Echizen was prevented from enforcing his laws which aimed at the correction of many existent abuses. During the closing years of the Tokugawa government, many wise measures proposed by the Cabinet met with defeat, owing to the ascendancy of the power of the Boudoir.

At the time of the first American Embassy the Shogun was a young weak prince, but he had a very able prime minister named Abe Ise-no-Kami. It was through him that a treaty was negotiated with Commodore Perry, in spite of the belligerent spirit of the Daimyos. The greatest question, next to the foreign problem, was as to whom the next Shogun should be, and here, again, the Boudoir came into the limelight. Keiki seemed to be the suitable one for the succession, but there was one difficulty in the way--the Shogun and the ladies of the Court disliked him. As a Samurai and vassal, Abe's duty was to obey the wishes of his master, while as a minister he recognized the power of the Boudoir. The ladies did not want a strong-minded man who would not be a puppet in their hands.

When Abe died, Hotta became prime minister. He was not popular with the Daimyos, and this afforded an opportunity for the Boudoir to obtain control of the government, and during his sojourn in Kyoto the ladies of Yedo Castle replaced him by a premier who had

agreed to side with them in the choice of a future Shogun. The new minister, Hikone, however, was of no servile spirit though he was the choice of the Boudoir. At heart he was a loyal Tokugawa; his traditional loyalty resented the disloyalty of the Court and the Daimyos, and he launched out on an independent line that caused his death, but the power of the Boudoir was broken. Attacks on the Tokugawa ministers caused an Imperial summons to forty Daimyos to come to protect Kyoto. The Throne once more became the seat of authority. The Boudoir, in attempting to crush the Cabinet, dealt a death blow to the entire Tokugawa government.

RESTORATION AND REFORMATION

The Restoration was at the same time a Reformation. It was a return to a form of Imperial bureaucracy such as had existed before the rise of Feudalism over seven hundred years ago. It brought two great reforms:

- 1 - It reestablished all the ancient offices together with their former nomenclature, and Shintoism was proclaimed the religion of the Imperial Household. All these revivals were tempered with a new spirit of freedom and equality; liberty of conscience was granted to the entire nation; Christianity was freed and all class privilege abolished.
- 2 - Modern life was to be met along four main lines:
 - a - Constitutional government
 - b - Liberal education
 - c - Universal military service
 - d - Elevation of womanhood

To us in this study the most important feature of the Reformation lay in the exaltation of womanhood.

The Western attitude of profound respect toward the gentler sex exhibits a beautiful phase of refinement which we are anxious to emulate. It is one of the noblest messages that Christianity has given us. Christianity originated in the East, and, except as regards womanhood, its modes of thought are not new to the Eastern mind. As the new religion spread westward through Europe, it naturally became influenced by the idiosyncrasies of the various perverted nations, so that the poetry of the German forest, the Adoration of the Virgin in the middle centuries, the Age of Chivalry, the songs of the troubadours, the delicacy of the Latin nature and above all the clean manhood of the Anglo-Saxon race probably all contributed their share toward the idealization of women.

In Japan woman has always commanded a respect and a freedom not to be found elsewhere in the East. We have never had a Salic law, and it is from the

female divinity, the sun goddess, that our Mikado traces his lineage. During many of the most brilliant epochs in our ancient history we were under the rule of a female sovereign. Our Empress Jingo personally led a victorious army into Korea, and it was Empress Suiko who inaugurated the refined culture of the Nara period. Female sovereigns ascended the Throne in their own right even when there were male candidates, for we considered women in all respects as the equal of man. In our classic literature we find more great authoresses than authors, while in feudal days some of our Amazons charged with the bravest of the Kamakura knights.

As time advanced and Confucian theories became more potent in molding our social customs, woman was relegated from public life and confined to what was considered by the Chinese sage as her proper sphere, the household. Our inherent respect for the rights of women, however, remained the same, and as late as the year 1630 a female Mikado, Meisho-Tenno, ascended the Throne of her fathers. Until after the Restoration a knowledge of such martial exercises as fencing and jiu-jitsu was considered part of the education of a Samurai's daughter and is, indeed, still so considered among many old families.

Among the commoners the various industries and trades have always been open to women, and they are today, while we have already seen how, in spite of her apparent seclusion, the Tokugawa lady impressed her individuality on the state. Buddhism has its worship for the eternal feminine, and Confucianism has always inculcated a reverence for womanhood, teaching that the wife should always be treated with the respect due to a friend or guest.

We have never hitherto, however, learned to offer any special privileges to women. Love has never occupied an important place in Chinese literature, and in the tales of Japanese chivalry the samurai, although ever at the service of the weak and oppressed, gave his help irrespective of sex. Today we are convinced that the elevation of women is the elevation of the race. She is the epitome of the past and the reservoir of the future, so that the responsibilities of the new social life which is dawning on the ancient realms of the sun goddess may be safely entrusted to her care.

Since the Restoration we have not only confirmed the equality of sex in law but have adopted that attitude of respect which the West pays to woman. She now possesses all the rights of her Western sister, though she does not insist upon them; for almost all of our women still consider the home and not society as their proper sphere.

Time alone can decide the future of the Japanese woman, for the question of womanhood is one involving the whole social life and its web of conventions. In the East woman has always been worshipped as a mother, and all those honors which the Christian knight brought in homage to his ladylove, the Samurai laid at his mother's feet. It is not that the wife is less adored, but that maternity is holier. Again, our woman loves affection, and love rejoices more in giving than in receiving. In the harmony of Eastern society the man consecrates himself to the State, the child to the parent, and the wife to the husband.*

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Okakura, Kazuko, *Op. cit.*, A Resume of Chapter VIII

THE MEIJI ERA

NEW JAPAN

With the opening of the country to foreign intercourse in the middle of the nineteenth century, the impact of Western ideas and civilization naturally had its effect on Japanese womanhood as well as on all other things Japanese. The education of both sexes was encouraged, and both men and women were sent to Europe and America at government expense to study. In so far as the aristocracy was concerned, the Emperor Meiji, in a rescript issued in 1871 A.D., laid a special emphasis on the desirability of wives, daughters and sisters accompanying members of the nobility who went abroad, so that they might see for themselves how in the lands they visited women received their education, and would also learn the way to bring up children.

Although the number of women sent to study in foreign lands was necessarily limited, the influence exercised by them in spreading a knowledge of Western ideas and thoughts among their sisters in Japan on their return was by no means inconsiderable. In this they were assisted by missionaries, teachers and foreigners of all sorts, while the introduction of foreign books helped still more to disseminate knowledge which was bound to influence their whole outlook on life.*

The first group of girls sent by the Empress to America to study Western culture was composed of six wellborn little girls. They were sent to grow up with the English language under American influences, in order to become interpreters between the East and the West. Before their departure the Empress honored them by calling them before her, and as she bade them farewell she said: "Her Majesty appreciates your ambition to study abroad. As Japanese women's education is in a stage of transition, you will bring yourselves up to be models for your country women on your completion

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Scherer, James A.B., The Romance of Japan, p.254

of the intended study abroad." These little girls were Ume Tsuda, aged nine; Shigeo Nagai, aged ten; Sutematsu Yamakawa, aged twelve; Ryoko Yoshimasu, aged sixteen; and Tokiko Yeda, aged eighteen. They went in the party of Prince Tomomi Iwakura which was on a round-the-world trip to observe Western customs. All lived in American homes and then went to college. The one in this group who turned out to be especially famous was Ume Tsuda. She is known as Japan's greatest woman educator and has been greatly honored for the work which she has done to raise the standard of woman's education.

Miss Tsuda graduated at Bryn Mawr College with honors and returned to Japan in her late twenties so steeped in English as to be almost unable to speak Japanese. She was put in charge of a great school for noble women in Tokyo at a large salary, but she felt herself so hampered that she resigned and founded her own school for teaching English to Japanese girls of all classes.

It may not be over-fanciful to compare her with Marco Polo, the explorer and revealer of Asia; with Columbus, the discoverer of the West; with Perry, the pathfinder between East and West, because without the work in behalf of a common understanding that Tsuda College exemplifies, their work might prove, after all, worse than useless. Before the circuit of civilization which Polo, Columbus and Perry first traced around the globe can be permanently secured, we must have an understanding between East and West, and so the little interpreter, whose material equipment was utterly demolished in the great earthquake of 1923, still went bravely forward with her work of enabling two hemispheres to keep the Pacific Ocean true to its name.*

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Kennedy, M.D., The Changing Fabric of Japan, p.137

Kakei Atomi

Even before this group of girls was sent to America, Kakei Atomi, the daughter of a family once rich but reduced to very straitened circumstances, resolved never to marry and to do something to help her family. She was a very bright girl, and even at the age of ten she helped her father teach the Chinese classics. She studied art and the Chinese language and paid her own expenses by painting fans, sometimes sitting up all night and painting a hundred fans for sale. In 1870 A.D. Miss Atomi started a school in Tokyo, gathering pupils about her until in 1875 A.D. she organized a school which is still famous for her own name, The Atomi Girl's School. She has graduated 6000 girls, many of them from noble families. Miss Mori, the famous actress, is a graduate of this school.

Utako Shimoda

Utako Shimoda is another painter of fans who became a great educator and the founder of a girls' school. She won the attention of the Empress because of her poetry. Her father, who was ill and needed funds, sent her verses to the Court poet, who showed them to the Empress. She was ordered to the Palace and told to write some verses on the spot. She was fortunately able to compose some poems that delighted the Empress and was rewarded by being given the name of Utako, which means poetry. She was appointed to Court service and engaged to be companion to the Empress, teaching her Chinese and English. Later she married, was widowed, and then resolved to go into the educational field. She was dean for some

years of the Peeresses School and then founded the Jissen Girl's School and the Girl's Technical School in 1899 A.D. This is one of the largest girl's schools in Tokyo, and Madame Shimoda is active in many lines of feminine leadership.

Eiko Kageyama

A few years after the restoration of the Emperor in 1868 A.D., a young woman named Eiko Kageyama started a school whose main object was to attack the long established social and family system with a view to easing the lot of her country women. She was not allowed to propagate her radical ideas for long before she was put in jail. This pioneer woman agitator may have felt that she failed in her work, but what she wanted to do has grown from the seed she planted until women have acquired a kind of independence and freedom much more radical than she dared dream of sixty years ago.

CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

The family is still the most potent power in a Japanese woman's life, but economic laws and the disintegrating principles of industrialization have weakened it to a degree that is alarming to the male leaders in Japan. The old system where each member of the family was dependent on the others has given way to one in which individual members go out to work and become independent because of wages in their own hands. Women and girls who thus win their economic freedom are never willing to go back to the old bondage, and even in marriage their status and attitudes are changed, for they know that they have a value as workers and could again earn their own living. In olden times only the courtesan class of women left their homes to work, but in the new changing Japan women were thrust out into public labor at such a rate that by 1929 there were 1,724,673 women earning wages as industrial workers, besides a million more in professional work, and since that date the figures have doubled and trebled. It is not strange that these large groups of women coming into their independent rights should unite to demand privileges and justice.

Three women's organizations aiming at emancipation were formed in 1927. These three groups were made up of educated women of the upper middle class from the cities. A fourth, however, was formed the following year which was composed almost entirely of working

women who allied themselves with the Labor Farmer Party, the most extreme proletarian party of that time. This league of women soon amalgamated with the National Woman's League, the two joining to form the Proletarian Woman's League. They organized to fight for sex equality and just legislation in matters that concern women. Contact with the outside world is making them question why they should receive less wages than men for the same work, and the spread of education teaches them to ask why the law should discriminate against them in such matters as inheritance, divorce and political rights and set different standards of morality for men and women.

Even the cinema with its depiction of love and respect accorded to women in western countries plays its part--sometimes it must be admitted with results not wholly to the good of society.

They have won the sympathy of an increasingly large number of men, as well as that of a large section of the vernacular Press, and improvements are already in evidence. Former inequalities in the matter of divorce were dealt a severe blow in 1927 by the ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of the woman who brought an action against her husband on the grounds of his infidelity. Similarly, political rights, which formerly were withheld entirely, are now being accorded to women who, since 1922, have been permitted to attend political meetings and take an active part in political discussions.

Every year hosts of new laws concerning women's interests are being proposed at each session of the Diet, and, although the majority of them do not pass, still every year it is easy to see that the ranks of women's sympathizers and friends are growing.*

Miss Tsuda, in a lecture to foreigners at Karuizawa some

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Kennedy, M.D., Op. cit., p.143

fifteen years ago, said that the laws of Japan concerning women were not so bad, but the important fact was that women did not know the law, nor did they know that they had the right to take advantage of the law and appeal to the courts for their rights. Organized groups of women are now studying the laws and encouraging women to present their cases, even promising financial and legal aid.

Japanese sensitiveness to foreign opinion has much to do with the changing attitude of the country as a whole toward the treatment of women. It's a growing desire on the part of educated Japanese to remove these discriminations which are most likely to bring reproach. This is undoubtedly one of the main factors in the movement aiming at the abolition of licensed prostitution, and it is likewise accountable to no small extent for the movement in support of women's rights generally.

As far back as the closing years of the last century a famous educator, Fukuzawa, had come out in favor of improving woman's lot, and by the revision of the Civil Code in 1898 women's personal rights were given more recognition than formerly. Polygamy was made illegal; to force a woman to marry against her will was also forbidden; women over the age of twenty-five were given the right to marry the men of their own choice, even without the consent of the family head; women were allowed to possess property of their own; married women, with the permission of their husbands, were permitted to engage in business of their own.*

It was not until 1907 that the first women's organization was formed. Yet this women's patriotic association, which now boasts a membership of half a million, has nothing to do with improving the real status or conditions of women.

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Kennedy, M.D., Op. cit., p.144

The large federation of women's clubs in western Japan, organized in 1919, which has almost three million members, has likewise never set out to accomplish any specific reform in the woman's field. Leaders are hoping that both it and the Young Women's Association, with a membership of a million and a half, may be persuaded to give support to the fight for suffrage. One feels as she attends such meetings that the women of Japan have still not awakened, and that they have received just about as much as they have asked for. They go to these large meetings and are entertained and feasted all day by the newspapers who use them for advertising purposes. Their programs are made by men--the meetings are presided over by men at the request of the timid officers who fear it would be unladylike to raise their voices in such a large hall. Usually, the speakers are men, who many times do not hesitate to tell the women that the female was created for one purpose only, to be the mistress and servant of the male. However, occasionally, some courageous woman arises and throws a bomb into the set program. The writer was present on one such occasion. The lady in the chair on the platform happened to be a geisha, the well-known mistress of a prominent man. A little woman in foreign dress arose in the audience and asked that the chair be filled by a woman with the legal standing of a wife. The chairwoman pretended not to hear, but later she found herself feeling faint and retired to the back of the stage, and a woman with a clear legal status as a wife was given the chair. From that time on, no woman has dared

to hold an office in this society unless she is a regularly married woman with a clear title.

The first woman's society with the purpose of teaching women to fight for their rights was formed in 1911 and was called the Seitoshu, or Blue Stocking Society. These women, in order to show their defiance, set out to shock the public into attention. They practiced free love, smoked and drank and indulged in loud conversation in public, and dressed in a way unheard of amongst refined women in Japan. The result was that they made such a reputation for themselves that they were forced to disband after only three year's activity. However, they started a movement which attracted the attention of able women who, in turn, started the first organization of a political character in Japan called the Shinfujin Kyokwai, or New Women's Society, in 1920. This society took as their platform higher education for women, better treatment of women laborers, woman's suffrage improvement in the legal position of women and vocational equality with men. Two years later they were rewarded by the withdrawal of the ban on women attending political gatherings.

Due to jealousies and differing opinions at this early stage, the New Women's Society broke up, but five new societies sprang from it, and the Women's Suffrage League was launched. Even yet, there are not many women who dare to even want to vote, but everywhere there are an increasing number of women who are dedicating their lives to reforms and who are coming to see that it is only through suffrage that they can realize their desires for themselves and their children.

During the past fifty years scores of women have had the opportunity to show their leadership and genius. Unlike the boudoir of the preceding eras, they have been educated women of fine mental calibre and of such forceful character that they have commanded places of responsibility and have forced respect, even from the old-fashioned man of affairs. .

Madame Kaji Yajima

One of the great women of this generation was Madame Kaji Yajima, who was the first woman to organize a woman's society for prohibition. Madame Yajima's own husband was a drunkard who broke up their home and forced her into public life as one of the first women public school teachers in Japan. Later, in 1889, she was appointed principal of Joshi Gakuin, a mission school in Tokyo. Her experiences as a wife and as a teacher convinced her that strong measures should be taken against the habit of strong drink, which is such a destroyer of life all over Japan. Through the influence of an American woman she got the courage to organize a Prohibition Society. People were amazed to see a Japanese woman taking initiative in public life. She built a national organization that lives today as the W.C.T.U., which stands in Japan as an effective active agent in working for purity, woman's rights, child protection and prohibition. Out of it, also, has grown a college students' Prohibition Movement and hundreds of village organizations and an educational campaign movement that reaches ten million school children. At the age of eighty-eight, Madame Yajima took her third

trip abroad, being sent to Washington, D.C., just before the Disarmament Conference to hand to President Harding a resolution declaring for peace, signed by 10,000 women in Japan.

Miss Utako Hayashi

Another great woman in the anti-vice movement is Miss Utako Hayashi. She has led, to a large degree of success, three campaigns against prostitution in Osaka. She took over from an early dying philanthropist an orphanage which he had started and has given new chances to hundreds of children. She started the Osaka W.C.T.U. in 1899; led the women in relief work for soldiers; made a trip to America to study charitable institutions and, impressed with the need of protection for women, founded on her return from America the W.C.T.U. Woman's Home in Osaka. When some houses of prostitution in Osaka burned down, Miss Hayashi led the women's campaign opposing their rebuilding. The buildings were rebuilt but were forced to go outside the city. She made such a personal fight for purity in Osaka that she became known all over Japan and received a decoration from the Government for her courageous work. She so moved the Sixth Annual Social Workers' Convention in 1921 that they, with over 1500 delegates, most of whom were not Christians, sent a resolution to the Government asking that the system of prostitution be abolished.

Mrs. Motoko Hani

Mrs. Motoko Hani is a woman who has had a very wide influence through her educational work and as editor of a monthly magazine

which goes to thousands of homes throughout the Empire. The magazine is called The Woman's Companion and furnishes articles on modern dress, preparation of foods and other domestic subjects. It is said that Mrs. Hani has, more than any other person, influenced the public schools to put the children into European dress. It is practically impossible to find a school child in kimono these days, even in the country villages. Mrs. Hani is perhaps best known as the founder of the Jiju Gakuen or Liberty-Learning Garden, a girl's school which has attracted much attention among educationalists of Japan and of visiting western teachers, as well. Dissatisfied with the red tape and the formal program of the usual girl's school, she dared to organize her school on extremely new lines--emphasizing "usable knowledge and development of personality". She has each class organized into groups of six that make a family. This six remains together during the school year, cooks its own lunches at the school, guides its unruly and assists its weak members; learning lessons of actual living as well as those of academic instruction. Her school is known as the model school for girls in all Japan.

Mrs. Hani and several of her educator friends founded a Federation of Girl's School Alumnae in Tokyo in 1918, the purpose of which is to combine the efforts of educated women for the uplift of women and girls in all lines. Lecture meetings are held to educate the members to have intelligent opinions on women's problems.

Mrs. Suzuki

Japanese women have not been leaders in business, as have Chinese women, though a few have shown marked executive ability. Mrs. Suzuki of Kobe was left a widow with one son when she was but thirty years old. She was heir to her father's estate and inherited half a million yen. She put her money into her deceased husband's business, surrounded herself with able business men and developed the Suzuki Company into one of the most powerful business concerns in all Japan with branches in every great city in the world. Unfortunately, with the failure of one of the great Japanese banks a few years ago, the Suzuki Company failed, and Mrs. Suzuki now leads a very quiet life in a little home on Suma Beach. While wealthy, she was interested in the Girl's Commercial School in Kobe, which she founded and completely supported for the first five years of its life.

Madame Hirooka

Another famous woman in business circles was Madame Hirooka. She belonged to the famous banking family, the Mitusuis. Her husband was a very poor business man, and she, sensing the danger to their family fortune, broke all traditions concerning the place of the wife and went to the firm in Osaka and took charge of the business, much to her husband's relief. She even arranged a second marriage for him to a woman who was much more suited to him. She became a very active Christian and was baptized when she was past sixty years of age. She went all over Japan speaking for

Christianity. She had planned to found a Bible School for the training of Christian leaders but died before her plans were put into action.

Michi Kawai

Michi Kawai is a fine proof and an inspiring prophecy of the manner in which Japan's awakening womanhood is reacting to its new world. She was born under the eaves of the great shrine of Ise, which is dedicated to the sun goddess. Her ancestors helped to found the Imperial Shrine, and the family is fortieth in the line of Shinto priests who have served there. Changes in the personnel of the Shrine led to her father's retirement, and unfortunate business ventures swept away the family fortune. Borne down by the tragedy that had overtaken him, her father went often to the temple at the twilight hour. Leaving her seated on the stone lantern outside, he entered behind the veil. His sorrow was sore, and so his prayers were long. While he was within, the little girl amused herself by striking flint against her stone seat and flashing fire into the darkness settling around her. The family was forced to move to the northland in Hokkaido, and there Michiko was taught Christianity by her uncle. She entered a Christian school at Sapporo and won a scholarship in Bryn Mawr. Here she took honors and upon graduating returned to Japan with the purpose of passing on what she had learned to the young womanhood of her country. She spent ten years teaching, and all her spare time was used in studying the conditions of women, being able now to contrast them with those of the women of other lands. She felt keenly the dangers to girls of the new industrial situation, and she became the National Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., feeling that she must give all her time to guiding girls and women as they met the new problems of a nation's awakened womanhood. She is a very forceful speaker and has the advantage of being a tall, handsome woman with a very attractive personality, together with a very enthusiastic desire to serve. Her work has been nation-wide, and she has visited schools, factories, and business houses, speaking to 150,000 women a year.*

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Axling, William, Japan on the Upward Trail, p.73

She has also been an international figure and has been sent abroad many times to represent the Christian Women of Japan in international gatherings and to lecture before women's clubs and Christian groups. She is a woman with a world vision, and she has been able to bring a new outlook and new hope to many leaders amongst Japanese women. She, in conjunction with Mrs. Ochimi Kubushiro, has lately written a book called Japanese Women Speak, which has set down for the first time an account of what the Christian women of this generation have accomplished and a great vision of what they are sure to do in the future. One could never doubt the strength of the Christian leadership of women in Japan after reading this book.

At present, Miss Kawai is the President and founder of a private girl's school on the outskirts of Tokyo.

Dr. Yoshioka

Dr. Yoshioka is a woman who has done much to raise the status of professional women in Japan. After a great struggle, she gained a medical education in Tokyo in the Saisei Medical School, which was then a co-educational institution. Soon after she graduated the school was closed to women, and Dr. Yoshioka was led to the conviction that she should open a school for the young women who were clamoring for a medical education. She had no money and had to start in a very small way; in fact, with only one pupil, but the school grew, and soon there were thirty students with only one microscope. A bit of success came in 1908, and she was able to add a hospital to the school and such equipment that the department of education was forced to recognize this school and grant degrees to the graduates.

The first pupil graduated became a very successful doctor and built a maternity hospital of her own in one of the most densely populated areas in Tokyo. She married a doctor and is now famous as Dr. Takeuchi. She worked day and night providing means for her husband and her brother and her sister-in-law to study for the highest medical honors. She, herself, during this period, also made a special study of the physique of Japanese women, which was the first study of its kind ever to be made in Japan. All these years, while busy in her hospital service, she had been making a survey of the physical development of women, examining about 15,000 Japanese women, students, teachers, telephone girls, mid-wives,

factory girls, country women, geisha, dancers and waitresses. Her study was so comprehensive that she was given the highest degree by the medical college of the Imperial University in Tokyo. Busy as she has been, she has found time to help raise funds to open a tubercular hospital for the very poor. She is a well-known and much beloved Christian doctor.

Raicho Hiratsuka

There are a few women who have become famous as suffrage leaders. When Japan was first planning to open its Diet, a Constitutional Monarchy was established, and there were some women at that time who started a cry for women to be given political rights. But little attention was paid to their requests, and it was not until 1921 that the suffrage movement was started by Miss Raicho Hiratsuka. She gathered quite a large group of women who by their influence in 1922 got the law rescinded which prohibited women from attending political talks.

Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto

Baroness Ishimoto is a famous author, lecturer, a successful business woman, one of the pioneer leaders in the Suffrage Movement and the woman who started the Birth Control Movement in Japan. She opened, in 1934, the first scientifically operated birth control clinic in Tokyo.

Shidzue Ishimoto comes of an old cultured Samurai family and is the daughter of Baron Ritaru Hirota, a wealthy nobleman of Tokyo. She attended the Peeresses' School from kindergarten age

and associated only with children of the aristocracy. At the age of seventeen Shidzue became engaged to a young Baron Keikichi Ishimoto, son of a wealthy family and a student in the mining engineering department of the Imperial University. He had been greatly influenced by the great Christian teacher, Dr. Inazo Nitobe, and was especially interested in social problems and humanistic ideals. He graduated with honors, able to use English, German and Chinese, and was a most earnest and progressive Christian. He had very modern ideas about marriage and social life, although he was forced to observe the old customs and forms of his family. In his diary, kept throughout his student days, he wrote, "Oh God, bless my heart! If Thy will is to make me Thy faithful servant and let me work to bring Thy Kingdom on earth, then select for me the wife with whom I shall work to bring glory to Thy Name." And after his engagement he wrote, "I am not hoping that my wife, Shidzue, will be a Baroness of the sort depicted in fiction and drama, leading an elaborate life amid luxurious surroundings; what I really hope for her future is that she will concern herself with the great problems of her country-women!"

After their marriage, December 23, 1914, the young couple went to the Miike Coal Mining Field in west Japan and began their new life, not in a Baron's splendid residence, but in a little shabby cottage furnished by the mining company. It had a straw thatched roof, no bathing accommodations, tiny dark rooms and an attic where they slept. The only luxury was the maid who had come with them from Tokyo. Here they lived for almost three years

exactly as the miners' families lived and on the same budget. Baron Ishimoto was then forced by the doctor's orders to take a long rest because of failing health. So they, together with their little two year old son, returned to Tokyo just before the second son was born. Baron Ishimoto took a position with the Mitsui Co., being asked to make a study of coal washing in the Mitsui Chemical Laboratory in Tokyo. Later he was sent to America, Mexico and Europe to study industrial and social conditions of the working people, especially the miners. This study was done partly in the interest of the Mitsui Co., but half privately for his own satisfaction.

Baroness Ishimoto did not go with him, but after he left she had such a prophetic fear that something would happen to take her husband from the life of peace and love which they had known together that she left her two small children, followed her husband, joining him joyfully in California after a six month's separation. After a happy sight-seeing trip in California, they went to New York where Baron Ishimoto insisted that his wife enter school, get professional training and master the English language. Baron Ishimoto felt that every woman should be able to support herself and be a leader in the affairs of her country-women. While she was studying in New York, he was sent to Mexico to inspect the metal mines, and there he met a group of American Socialists who had gone with the purpose of stirring up trouble among the working men. When he returned to the United States, through the introduction of these men, he became associated with many radical labor leaders and Socialists

who completely upset his Christian belief. They persuaded him that religion was a soporific and only weak men, women and children had any interest in the church. Baroness Ishimoto could hardly believe the change which she saw being worked in him. When he went to Europe, she begged to go with him, but he refused her request. He had hoped especially to go to Russia and study conditions. Much to his disappointment he was not allowed to enter Russia but was led to an extreme faith in and an admiration for Soviet Russia.

Baroness Ishimoto followed him to Europe and found him a completely changed man. He was utterly cold to her and out of sympathy with all the ideals and principles which he had taught her so earnestly during the first years of their marriage. From this time on, Baron Ishimoto lost all love for and interest in his wife and children, and upon returning to Japan he finally deserted them and went alone to Manchuria to retrieve his fortunes and to study conditions, believing that it was Japan's true mission to start a national drive to secure the huge natural wealth in Manchuria and Mongolia. Baroness Ishimoto's heart and life were broken, and in desperation, as well as in real financial need, she opened a chain of wool-shops in Tokyo, teaching women and girls to knit underwear and sweaters which were greatly needed by the people. She thus began a new life as a self-supporting woman.

The way that Baroness Ishimoto adjusted herself to her new life is a tragic story, but one which thrills every woman who reads her autobiography, Facing Two Ways, written in 1935 and

published in America. She became a pioneer leader in the feminist movement, in the interest of which she did much writing. In order to help women to raise funds for political work, she organized the Reijitsu-Kai, Bright Sunshine Society, most of the members of which were bourgeoisie women who wanted to join the feminist movement but were unable to get the money to join in the activities of the society. Baroness Ishimoto has made a thorough study of the feminist movement in other lands and has given herself wholeheartedly to this phase of woman's life in Japan.

When Mrs. Margaret Sanger came to Japan in 1922, she found in Baroness Ishimoto the woman to introduce birth control as a solution of the ever present problem of over-population. Baroness Ishimoto had been greatly interested in this subject while studying in America, and she welcomed Mrs. Sanger to Japan with great enthusiasm. The police authorities and government officials were greatly troubled by the propaganda started by Mrs. Sanger's visit. Mrs. Sanger was called by mistake Mrs. "Sangai"; Sangai, in Japanese, means "destructive to production". She was officially restrained from making public speeches concerning birth control, but the people at large heard her story in a very dramatic way. No group could come together, whether foreign or Japanese, in which she and her theories were not the subject of lively conversation. She not only had great success in Tokyo, but she was warmly welcomed by the people of Kyoto and Osaka. Her accomplishment in increasing interest in birth control was extraordinary. Shortly after her visit, a group of interested persons undertook

to gather birth control facts and study the question more deeply in its relationship to Japan. They organized as a Research Society in July, 1922.

Baroness Ishimoto became very active in this movement. They called her "Lady Control" and drew horrible caricatures of her in the newspapers and magazines. She spoke on the subject at every opportunity, often being hissed for belittling the military glory of the nation, because, they said, she was urging her fellow women to bear fewer soldiers for her country.

About this time Japan was stirred by the suicide of Mrs. Aki Hatano, wife of a business man and a member of the editorial staff of The Women's Review, the most progressive and popular woman's magazine in Japan. Mrs. Hatano was one of the leading feminists and intellectuals in Japan, but she had a love affair with Takeo Arishima, a famous author who was called the Tolstoi of Japan. In July, 1923, the couple committed a double suicide, hanging themselves side by side in Arishima's Karuizawa cottage. All Japan was stirred by this tragedy.

Mrs. Hatano and Baroness Ishimoto were intimate friends, and Mrs. Hatano left a note for Mrs. Ishimoto explaining the motive of her death. The Baroness was blamed in public newspapers for leading Mrs. Hatano and other women into feminism and a kind of life wholly unsuited for women. Public censure took no account of the guilt of Mr. Arishima. It all centered on Mrs. Hatano and eventually upon all modern women in Japan. Baroness Ishimoto could not understand why the woman alone was charged with the

guilt, and she attempted to take the part of her friend and brought down upon herself the accusation of being a "loathsome rebel against the social order". She became, herself, the target of journalism all over Japan, "since the dead woman, being speechless, was no longer interesting". The society women of Tokyo pointed a finger of scorn at her, and their hostilities greatly hindered her work and social activities. Her family and relatives looked on her as a "black sheep". Her husband took no interest in her defense and refused her any sympathy.

About this time the great earthquake occurred. Baroness Ishimoto's shop, family treasures and other forms of family wealth were destroyed. She refused to break down at this calamity and opened up her business again. However, she soon closed her Minerva yarn-shops and planned a trip to America with her husband, hoping thus to restore the Baron's health and peace of mind and hoping, above all, to regain the companionship they had known at the time of their marriage.

In America, Baroness Ishimoto again met Mrs. Sanger and many other prominent men and women who entertained her. Among these friends were many American feminists from whom she was anxious to learn of the movement in America. From Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt and Mrs. Marion Blatch she studied the fight of American and English women to obtain suffrage. Mrs. Catt saw in her a great leader, and in one of her books, "Woman's Suffrage and Politics", wrote on the flyleaf, "To Baroness Ishimoto, who, I predict, will lead the women of Japan to their emancipation from outworn traditions"

and gave it to Baroness Ishimoto. The sympathy and encouragement given her by these American and European suffrage leaders sent her home fresh for battle.

Upon their return to Tokyo, Baron Ishimoto's interests in Korea and Manchuria took more and more of his time, until he was away from home practically all the time and, again, was completely out of sympathy with his wife and family.

Baroness Ishimoto's financial situation again became so insecure that she realized that she must make plans to support and educate her two sons. She has, during the past three years, published two books in English, an autobiography, Facing Two Ways, which has been a best-seller in America, and East Way--West Way. In 1932-33 she came to America under the auspices of the Peakin's Lecture Bureau, speaking on Japanese women, Japanese culture and Manchuria. After this tour, again inspired by her many friends in America, she hurried back to Japan to open the first birth control clinic in Tokyo, March, 1934, for which she took equipment from New York. The Birth Control Movement of Japan supported the experiment. She has now been recognized as the leader of this Movement and has spent the past three years working assiduously for what she believes to be the best answer to Japan's economic problems. In the autumn of 1936 she again made a short lecture trip to America.

JAPANESE WOMEN IN LITERATURE

There is a linguistic reason why women authors have been few, except in the Nara and Heian periods. When ideographic script was brought from China, and the attempt was made to apply it to the phonetic spoken language, the task proved to be extremely difficult. In the Chinese language, each written character has a sound, and when the Japanese word was fitted to the Chinese ideograph, either the Japanese word had to be changed or the sounds of the characters alone be taken and a phonetic syllabary formed. Both these devices were used in early times by scholars. Sometimes the ideographs were used simply to represent sounds, and pure Japanese words were built upon them, and sometimes the sounds of the Japanese words were altered to fit their Chinese equivalents. In this way each word came to have two pronunciations; first, the one used in colloquial language, and, second, its borrowed pronunciation used in the written language.

During the Nara period a wave of great regard for Chinese culture spread through the Court. It became a learned accomplishment to pronounce Japanese with the Chinese pronunciation. It was first a fad but finally the language became almost wholly Chinese, and scholars both wrote and spoke ideographically. The women, however, kept the old Japanese pronunciation. They wrote and spoke phonetically. Thus, there came to be a distinct

woman's language. It was considered coarse and rude for women to use the vocabulary of men and very weak and sentimental for men to use women's language. This difference, to a certain degree, exists even down to the present time. While girls and boys study the same language in school, in colloquial use, there is a sharp distinction drawn between women's and men's language. Women use very polite endings of words and quite a different vocabulary. This has affected woman's part in literature very materially.

Another result arising from the importing of the Chinese language characters greatly affected the place of Japanese women in literature. The Japanese, having no books of their own, borrowed freely from the rich mine of Chinese literature. Among the Princes and the high provincial school students the Chinese classics formed almost the entire curriculum. The advantages of such education were open to very few. During the Nara period there were only about 5,000 students in all Japan. The aim of instruction was to prepare men for official life and not for general culture or scholastic pursuits. All books had to be copied by hand, and the writing of the Chinese ideographs was so difficult that the mere transcribing became a profession and was achieved by very few. There is no record of any women being amongst these early students. But during the Nara and Heian periods there were many women authors. Aston says that "the poetry of these two periods was written by and for a very small section of the Japanese nation. The authors, many of them women, were

either members of the Mikado's Court or officials temporarily stationed in the provinces. Nearly every educated man and woman could indict a Tanka on occasion."

Several historians call attention to the fact that the reason why literature in these periods was left to women in great measure was that the attention of scholars was so engrossed in Chinese studies, complicated because of the difficult ideographs, that they had no time to write original material. Had men been creating literature that which women wrote might probably not have been noticed and certainly would not have gotten the attention which it did receive in that period. The women who produced the literature were highly educated, but they had to learn the language silently and surreptitiously while their brothers or husbands studied aloud. In the introduction to Lady Murasaki's "Tale of Genji" an anecdote of her childhood is told which illustrates this point. The writer says:

When my brother, Nobunari, was a boy, my father was very anxious to make a good Chinese scholar of him and often came himself to hear Nobunari read his lessons. On these occasions, I was always present and, so quick was I at picking up the language, that I was soon able to prompt my brother whenever he got stuck. At this my father used to sigh and say to me, "If only you were a boy, how proud and happy I should be." But it was not long before I repented of having thus distinguished myself; for person after person assured me that even boys generally become very unpopular if it is discovered that they are fond of books; for a girl, of course, it would be even worse and, after this, I was careful to conceal the fact that I could write a single Chinese character. This meant that I got very little practice; with the result that to this day I am shockingly

clumsy with my brush.

Another example is found in the fact that Murasaki was used by the young Empress for a purpose that the world would have considered far more improper than the philandering of which Her Majesty so sternly disapproved. The Empress had a secret desire to learn Chinese. The study of the language was, at the time, considered far too rough and strenuous an occupation for a woman. There were no grammars or dictionaries and "each horny sentence had to be grappled with and mastered like an untamed steer. That Akiko should wish to learn Chinese must have been as shocking to Michinaga, the prime minister and father of the Empress, as it would have been to Gladstone if one of his daughters had wanted to learn boxing." Murasaki had picked up something of the language by overhearing her brother's lessons. She did everything in her power to conceal this knowledge, even pretending that she could not read the Chinese characters on her mistress's screen; but somehow or other it became known. She wrote in her Diary "Since the summer before last, very secretly, in odd moments when there happened to be no one about, I have been reading with Her Majesty the two books of songs (Po Chu-i's Poetical Works). There has, of course, been no question of formal lessons. Her Majesty has merely picked up a little here and there as she felt inclined. All the same, I have thought it best to say nothing about the matter to anybody."

Lady Murasaki is the most famous of all Japanese lady novelists. She was born about 978 A.D. Her father belonged to a

minor branch of the powerful Fujiwara clan. He became governor of Echizen in 1004 A.D. and later governor of Echigo province. At some time between 994 and 998 A.D. Murasaki married her kinsman, Fujiwara no Nobutaka, a lieutenant in the Imperial Guard. They had two daughters, one of whom also became a novelist. The husband died when Murasaki was about 26 years old. Her father then arranged that she should be lady-in-waiting to the prime minister's daughter, Akiko, who had become the very serious-minded 16 year old Empress. Part of Murasaki's time was spent at the palace and part at the prime minister's home, to which Akiko, even though Empress, frequently returned. All this time Murasaki was keeping a diary which is one of the best sources from which to know something about the court life and the literature of the Heian era.

The Diary, also, gives us many interesting anecdotes in Murasaki's own private life. There are also notes on the appearance and character of the other ladies at Court. For instance, the following description is given of one of the court ladies associated with Murasaki who was one of the greatest poetesses Japan has produced:

Izumi Shikibu is an amusing letter writer; but there is something not very satisfactory about her. She has a gift for dashing off informal compositions in a careless running-hand; but in poetry she needs either an interesting subject or some classic model to imitate. Indeed, it does not seem to me that in herself she is really a poet at all. However, in the impromptus which she recites, there is always something beautiful or striking. But I doubt if she is capable of saying anything

interesting about other people's verses. She is not intelligent enough. It is odd, to hear her talk. You would certainly think that she had a touch of the poet in her. Yet, she does not seem to produce anything that anyone call serious poetry.

At another time, Murasaki criticised Sei Shonagon, saying:

Sei Shonagon's most marked characteristic is her extraordinary self-satisfaction. But examine the pretentious compositions in Chinese script which she scatters so liberally over the Court, and you will find them to be a mere patchwork of blunders. Her chief pleasure consists in shocking people; and as each new eccentricity becomes only too painfully familiar, she gets driven on to more and more outrageous methods of attracting notice. She was once a person of great taste and refinement, but now she can no longer restrain herself from indulging, even under the most inappropriate circumstances, in any outburst that the fancy of the moment suggests. She will soon have forfeited all claim to be regarded as a serious character, and what will become of her when she is too old for her present duties, I really cannot imagine.

These inuendos of her rivals in literary pursuits seem somewhat modern, and it is natural that she should come in for her share of jealous remarks. She says in her Diary that her nickname among the court ladies was Dame Annals.

There is a certain lady here called Saejemon no Nashi who has evidently taken a great dislike to me, though I have only just become aware of it. It seems that behind my back she is always saying the most unpleasant things. One day when someone had been reading my Tale of Genji outloud to the Emperor, His Majesty said, "This lady has certainly been reading the annals of Japan. She must be terribly learned." Upon the strength of this casual remark, Nashi spread a report all over the Court that I prided myself on my enormous learning and, henceforth, I was known as Dame Annals wherever I went.

Toward the end of her Diary is a paragraph that gives an idea of Murasaki's own character in this comment;

That I am very vain, reserved, unsociable, wanting always to keep people at a distance--that I am wrapped up in the study of ancient stories, conceited, living all the time in a poetical world of my own and scarcely realizing the existence of other people, save occasionally to make spiteful and depreciatory comments upon them,--such is the opinion of me that most strangers hold, and they are prepared to dislike me accordingly. But when they get to know me, they find to their extreme surprise that I am gentle and kind--in fact, quite a different person from the monster they had imagined; as, indeed, many have afterwards confessed. Nevertheless, I know that I have been definitely set down at Court as an ill-natured, censorious prig, not that I mind very much, for I am used to it and see that it is due to things in my nature which I cannot possibly change.

In the introduction to the "Tale of Genji" the translator says that we know nothing of Murasaki's life after the Diary closes in 1010 A.D., except that she continued in the service of the Empress, and that she is named in the list of those attending the birth ceremonies of the future Emperor, Go-Ryozen.

The "Tale of Genji" is an amazing novel to have been written in 1008 A.D. It has been beautifully translated into English by Arthur Waley and compares in interest with the "Forsyte Saga" or any collection of stories that we have in English, developing the life of a certain family or group. It might be considered tedious, because of its length, but it is so beautifully written, so full of poetry and pictures of romance, that anyone who has an interest in Oriental life could not but be

charmed by it, and, to one who has lived in the Orient, it is altogether fascinating. There is a difference of opinions as to the date of the novel. Several critics say that it was written in a Buddhist temple, but Mr. Waley thinks it more probable that while it was begun in a temple in 1001 A.D., it was written slowly, book by book, throughout Murasaki's life at Court, during her holidays and spare moments, and not completed until 1015 A.D. or 1020 A.D. The middle and later parts of the book seem to be the work of an older woman. We are certain that the novel was finished before 1022 A.D., because the "fifty odd chapters" of the "Tale of Genji" are referred to in the Sarashina Diary. We know from other references, too, that Murasaki died sometime before her father's death and long before Empress Akiko's death in 1074 A.D.

In Mr. Waley's translation of the "Tale of Genji" we have four complete books--"Tale of Genji"--"The Sacred Tree"--"The Wreath of Cloud"--and "Blue Trousers". These are stories of the Emperor and Empress, the Princes and Princesses of the Court and of all their menservants and waiting-maids and their families. The hero is the beautiful Prince Genji, and Murasaki is the heroine. Passionate and uncontrolled love was evidently given full sway in all lives high and low in the Court in this period, and even in present day literature one could not find more frank and open romantic expression. It is saved from being risqué by the poetical language and by the fact that it satisfies our imaginative ideas of what an Oriental Court really was like. Quotations

from Chinese poetry are so numerous as to form a background for the whole story. Men, women and children speak and write in the words of Chinese poets and sages, and yet the poetical language is so woven into the fabric as to enhance the story rather than to make it tedious or tiresome. The genealogical tables at the beginning of each book make it possible for the reader to keep a clear picture of the many characters. It is certainly a remarkable novel for any age and gives the reader a colorful page of history that sheds a romantic light on the whole idea of women in this period of old Japan.

Sei Shonagon

In his introduction to the "Pillow-Book" of Sei Shonagon, Arthur Waley says:

The life of the Heian Court in the 10th century is known to us chiefly through two documents, the "Tale of Genji", a novel by Murasaki Shikibu, and the "Pillow Book" by Sei Shonagon. The first has as a document the disadvantage of being fiction. Murasaki shows us the world, particularly the male part of it, rather as she would like it to have been than as she actually found it. She dreamed of lovers who, though in every sense men, should yet retain the gentleness and grace of her girl-friend, Saisho. How different was the world she actually lived in we can see in her Diary, which, fortunately, is also preserved. The "Pillow-Book", on the other hand, is a plain record of fact and, being at least ten times as long as Murasaki's Diary and far more varied in contents, it is the most important document of the period that we possess.

Makura no Soshi is a name given at this time to notebooks in which stray impressions were recorded. The Makura Zoshi of Sei Shonagon is the first example of a style of writing which

afterwards became popular in Japan under the name Zuihitsu, or, "following the pen". It has no sort of arrangement. The author sets down upon the spur of the moment anything which occurs to her--stories, lists of flowers and mountains and rivers, sketches of social and domestic life and thoughts suggested by contemplation of nature and events.

Translations of these two diaries and the Diary of Izumi Shikibu (which is not a genuine document but a romance written around the well-known stories of Izumi's love affairs), the "Pillow-Book" and the Sarashina Diary may be found in the "Court Ladies of Old Japan", a collection published in 1921. They are well translated in English by Annie S. Omori and Doi Kochi.

Sei Shonagon

Sei Shonagon, the authoress of the "Pillow-Book", was born in 967 A.D. She was the daughter of Kiyohara no Motosuke. The Kiyohara House was in the direct line of the Emperor Temmu and was a family especially noted for its literary ability. Prince Toneri, the founder of the family, was one of the compilers of the Nihongi (Chronicles of Japan), and Shonagon's great-grandfather was a court poet of the early 10th century. Sei Shonagon, at the age of 24, became lady-in-waiting to the Empress Sadako, who died in childbirth ten years later. It is with the events of these years (991-1000 A.D.) that the "Pillow-Book" is concerned. It consists partly of a diary and partly of short paragraphs on various subjects such as, Disappointing Things--Pretty Things--Stray Notes--Children--Amusing Things--Inappropriate

Things. No other miscellany like this exists. There is a Chinese book called Tsatsuan (Miscellaneous Notes) which some critics think may have been the author's model for this, but the only single copy of this book, now extant, came to Japan much later. Many bits of information have come down to us through this diary. For instance, Shonagon gives us a list of her favorite novels. Only one out of the eleven is now known, "The Hollow Tree". She sums up a young woman's education as consisting of writing, music, and the 20 volumes of Kokinshu, an anthology of poems.

The best possible short description of Shonagon's "Sketch Book" would be to take a few sentences from the introduction to the "Sketch Book" of Sei Shonagon by Mrs. L. Adams Beck in "The Wisdom of the East Series".

This book is really Sei Shonagon; a self-portrait, and as such it has much value in addition to its historic value--great as that undoubtedly is. What would we not give for such a picture of a Saxon Court in England?

She presents unblushingly her meannesses, cruelties, inveterate vanity, her selfishness and preoccupation with sexual considerations under the light of her sharply cut vision of the motives of others and comfortable illusions as to her own. She presents, also, her fundamental hard-heartedness and coolness to the physical side of passion and her ignorance of any of its spiritual correlations.

She makes a retreat now and then to a temple for the sake of rest and the Buddhist peace of the surroundings, but even then that sharp worldly eye is fixed not upon the peace of the surroundings, but upon the goings and comings

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of the fashionable pilgrims in the fashionable routine of religion--and, especially upon those men of family and wealth.

This portrait of herself is the more interesting because, in drawing it, she also recreated the Heian era of which she was the finished product: its faults and follies crystalize in her, but, also, its eternal worth to mankind and more, especially, to its own land.

Sei Shonagon and her friends possess the religion--the true worship of beauty. Beauty was her religion because to that she accomodated all her conduct. She had trained herself--a hard training--to such literary knowledge as included all the best of her kind and made her own literary expression an example of the purest and most cultivated form in the Japanese language. It is always pointed to with the pride commanded by true achievement. She excelled in the understanding of exquisite ceremonies and traditions. She had absorbed the beauty of the Chinese ideographs.

There is one remarkable lack in this book, as there is also in the "Tale of Genji", and that is also the amazing absence of any sense of humour in life. There are ironic touches here and there, but humour requires a sympathy she does not possess.

Arthur Waley says of her:

The character of Shonagon appears in her book as a series of contradictions. She reveals herself to us entirely from every facet. The strong impression we get is of her extreme fastidiousness and irritability which must have made her a formidable companion. As a writer, she is incomparably the best poet of her time, a fact which is apparent only in her prose and not at all in the conventional uta for which she is famous. As for her anecdotes, their vivacity is apparent even in translation. Neither in them nor in the more lyrical passages is there any hint of a search for literary effect. She gives back in her

pages the whole warmth and glitter of the life that surrounds her with as little effort as a gong that sounds when it is struck. This gift manifests itself in an extraordinary power of conveying character. Yukinari, Masahiro and Narimasa, despite their uniform absurdity, live with extraordinary distinctness as does the Empress herself, the only other woman whom Sei Shonagon allows to figure in her pages. She is said to have recorded her impressions at the Empress's request.

Shonagon has often been spoken of as learned. Our only source of information on the subject is her own book. In it she shows signs of knowing the Ming-ch'iu, a collection of edifying Chinese anecdotes. She knew, too, some poems by Po Chu-i, the easiest of Chinese writers, and she refers once to "The Analects of Confucius". In Japanese literature she knew the usual round of poems from the Kokinshiu and the Gosenshu. It was her extreme readiness of wit rather than her erudition that makes Shonagon remarkable. It is regrettable that this wit, more often than not, evaporates in translation. Almost every anecdote centers around some clever repartee or happy quotation. Shonagon displays her agile wits with the same delight as an athlete takes in running or leaping.

Several minor works of this period are still extant. The daughter of murasaki no Shikibu, Daini no Sammi, wrote the Sagoromo Monogatari. This is much inferior in style and subject matter to her mother's famous story, though obviously an imitation. It was written in 1040 A.D., about 39 years after the famous "Genji Tales". This document is a long and rather tedious love story.

The Sarashina Nikki (Diary) written by a daughter of the famous statesman, Sugawara no Michizane, was completed sometime

during the reign of Emperor Go Rei-zei (1046-1048 A.D.). It is a record of two trips--one from Shimosa to Kyoto along the Tokaido in 1021 A.D., and the other from Kyoto to Sarashina some years later. It is a very serious, even melancholy account and has many doleful poems scattered through it.

The Yeigwa Monogatari is noted because it is the first instance of the Japanese language being used for history. The authorship is not certain, but it is frequently ascribed to a celebrated poetess of this period, Akazome Yemon. It is certainly not exclusively her work, as it contains references to events which occurred after her death. But doubtless part of the material is hers and was incorporated into the work of some later author. The series consists of 46 books covering a period of two centuries of history. Because much of it shows a love of romantic episode and has a more or less poetic style and an imaginative treatment of the subject, it is more than likely that much of it came from the pen of a woman. The custom of giving fanciful headings to every chapter, which has ever since been done by Japanese novelists, began with these books and is another sign of a feminine touch.

Mr. Waley's summary of this period is interesting in the light of the theories advanced in the first paragraphs of this chapter in which the reasons for this being called "The Woman's Era" were given. He says:

Women seem to play an inordinately large role in the literary life of the Heian period.
How came they to secure a position that their

sex has nowhere else been able to achieve?

As far as the production of literature went, women did not, in fact, enjoy so complete a monopoly as European accounts of the period would suggest. But convention obliged men to write in Chinese (except in the case of the uta, small poems of thirty-one syllables) and not merely to use the Chinese language but to compose essays and poems, the whole attitude and content of which were derived from China. The use of the kana (easy Japanese phonetic syllabary) was considered unmanly.

Women, anthropologists tell us, are often the repositories of a vanishing or discarded culture, and their conservatism becomes more marked where the mastering of a new script is involved: for women, though quick at acquiring spoken languages, have seldom shown much aptitude for the study of difficult scripts. To a minor degree, the same phenomenon was repeated in Japan a thousand years later. While the energy of male writers was largely absorbed in acquiring a foreign culture, and their output was still too completely derivative to be of much significance, there arose a woman whose work hitching straight on to the popular novelettes of the 18th century has outlived the pseudo-European experimentations of her contemporaries. The fact that men of the 90's in Japan were absorbed in imitating Turgenev does not explain the occurrence of such a prodigy as Ichiyo Higuchi, a working seamstress who produced twenty-five long stories, forty volumes of diary, and six critical essays; nor does the convention which obliged men to write in Chinese explain the appearance during the Heian period of such female geniuses as Ono no Komachi, Michitsuna's mother, Izumi Shikibu, Sei Shonagon and Murasaki--a state of affairs all the more remarkable, seeing that from the 14th to the end of the 19th century not a single woman writer of any note made her appearance in Japan.

Kamakura Era

During the next historical period, the Kamakura era, the contributions of women to literature were insignificant. There were few romances, as it was a period of battles and combats, and the tales written are of warriors and feuds.

Several diaries and travel journals come from this period. The best-known, the Izayoi no Ki, was written by Lady Abutsu. Evidently she was a nun, as her name indicates. She belonged to the Royal House, and her immediate family was known for its literary skill. She was obliged to take a journey to Kamakura to help her son obtain his share of the family estate which had been usurped by an older step-brother. It is written in a very sentimental style with many poems, some of which contain a rather far-fetched play on words. One of these is especially interesting, because it alludes to intermittent puffs of smoke from the sacred mt. Fuji. This volcano has long been extinct. The writing is very much like the famous Tosa Diary and was probably modelled after it.

The Ben no Naiji Nikki, also by a woman, is not of much importance. It is a diary of incidents occurring between 1240 and 1252 A.D.

Yedo Period

The position of women in the Yedo era, 1603 to 1867 A.D., was very different from that of earlier periods. Women are now rarely heard of in public life and have disappeared entirely from literature. A great wave of Chinese influence swept the

country, deeply affecting every realm of life--laws, art, science, philosophy and literature. Women especially were affected by it. Confucianism became the creed of the military class and of the Court. It brought a stern code of morals--obligations imposed by loyalty to the Sovereign and filial duty which completely overshadowed personality and made individual life of no account. Especially degrading were the Chinese ideas of women leading to complete subjection and seclusion.

The Japanese language underwent a great change. Chinese words were used wherever possible in place of Japanese. Because of woman's lowly position in society, this shut her out completely from the education and cultural practices of the day. A voluminous mass of books were produced on every line. Yedo became the great literary center. Iyeyasu was a liberal patron of the printing press, and books were obtainable even by the humbler classes, but nowhere do we read of women having a part in the literature of the day.

During this period there was at least one literary man, Kaibara Ekken, profoundly interested in women. His wife was a very accomplished woman, and well versed in literature. She travelled with him all over Japan and assisted him in his writing. He was the first author to use the kana, the Japanese phonetic script, in order that women and children and ignorant people might read. He said that good living came directly from following the truth as taught by the sages, and, if the majority of the people and the women could not read, how could the nation

become good? The third volume of his work he devoted to the education of girls and women. This volume, Onna-Daigaku, has served as a standard of feminine conduct ever since Ekken's day. Nothing in all Japanese literature or culture has done more to make of woman a chattel and a nonentity in masculine opinion. Perhaps it would be more true to say that it gave men a written statement of attitudes already held and put upon the hands of women the handcuffs that were to hold them. It even bade them spring the lock themselves.

Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto, in her interesting biography, "Facing Two Ways", published in 1935, says of the Onna-Daigaku (Great Learning for Women):

In my grandfather's will he left me a brown silk furoshiki with white mountain cherry blossoms dyed upon it, a red carved lacquered jewelry box and a manuscript bound with a purple silk cord bearing the title, Onna-Daigaku, in beautiful Chinese ideographs. I cherished these gifts with affectionate and reverent remembrances, but later when I realized what was written in the manuscript I could not help revolting against the conception of women disclosed in this book. It was the epitome of all I had had to struggle against--the moral code that had chained women to the past. It made me see not myself, only, but all women of my race, yesterday, today and perhaps tomorrow. What a strange present to give to a young girl!*

This young girl, now a matron of some 40 years, has become one of the best-known women writers in Japan. She is especially well known to foreigners, as her biography, published in English two years ago, has been a best-seller in America. Throughout this biography Baroness Ishimoto made it plain that Kaibara

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Ishimoto, Baroness Shidzue, Facing Two Ways, p.38

Ekken's Onna-Daigaku had had a most unhappy influence upon the lives of her grandmother and mother and all the girls whom she knew in the present generation. Few books ever written have had such a definite, unquestioned influence upon a race of women as has this book. So, while it was not written by a woman, it requires mention in a chapter written on the subject "Japanese Women in Literature".

Contemporary Period

The development of the modern literature of Japan after the Restoration of 1868 is divided into six periods by Yusuke Tsurumi in his little volume, "Present Day Japan", which is a series of lectures given at Columbia University and published in 1924 under the Julius Beer Foundation. Up to the third period, beginning in 1894, Tsurumi mentions no women writers of note, but in the period 1894-1904 he refers to Ichiyo thus:

In the period right after the Chinese-Japanese War of 1894 a new spirit sprang from the consciousness of power which permeated the whole nation. The call of new adventure ran through her blood, and the note of glory rang in her ears. Japan found herself. The thirty years of zealous importation of Western culture began to bear fruit. The consciousness of a new Japan expressed itself in a "new Nationalism" urging that foreign culture not cover over the traditions of the past 3,000 years and in a "new Cosmopolitanism" which laid stress on the position of Japan in the world.

At this period of military heroism literature took on a new note of hopefulness and individual expansion. There was also another more substantial reason for the prosperity of literature in this period, and that was the material progress of the country after the war. Newspapers began to increase circulation, and

innumerable magazines appeared. Demands for literary productions increased in great proportions.

The first effect on imaginative literature appeared in the so-called "concept novel" which tried to interpret the conflicting theories of life that were growing up in the minds of the people. This was decidedly a step forward from the former period in that the novelists were becoming interested in the objective description of man in society, but the writers of this school did not produce any works of permanent value.

A second effect was to open the door to the novel of social criticism, and the first writer of this school was a young woman of delicate health and constrained material circumstances. Her pen name was Ichio-ya or "One Leaf".*

Ichio-ya Higuchi (1872-1896)

Ichio-ya was a seamstress who, in the years between 19 and 24, produced 25 long stories, forty volumes of diary and six critical essays. She was very poor and was obliged to support her aged mother and young sister. Being bored with her sewing, she determined to support them by writing, and before she was 20 she published her first novel. Her work was far from perfect in literary form and finish, but a new note ran through it. The intense earnestness and the great enthusiasm of the girl was stamped on every page. Because of her own experience, she felt that the world was a selfish place, and she was saddened by the fate of all mankind. She showed a spirit of revolt--the revolt of womankind against the tyranny of society. Above all, she resented the unjust treatment which women of the working classes received. She saw no hope for these poor women, and her writings were her

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Tsurumi, Yusuke, Present Day Japan, p.68

expression of the hopelessness of their condition. She challenged society to do something for these sufferers. In 1895 she wrote the book Take-Kurabe, which gave her a high place in the literary history of Japan. Tsurumi thinks that her work should be divided into two periods of two years each, and that only the stories of the second period will live. In the books written during the last two years of her life the spirit of revolt is changed into that of quiet resignation.

The greatest work of Ichio-yo, Take-Kurabe, which means "comparing the heights" is the story of a boy and girl whose lives are ruined by fate. The girl is the adopted daughter of a house in the licensed quarter, and she has been trained for the gay life of the geisha. The boy is the son of a Buddhist priest serving in a temple near the Yoshiwara. Ichio-yo draws a beautiful picture of their childhood as they play together, not dreaming of what the future holds for them. They grow up, and the boy is sent to his work in a far-off place. The night before he goes he puts before the gate a pot of flowers for his little sweetheart, and early in the morning she finds it. Ichio-yo tells us no more than this, and the reader is left to imagine how the girl felt, and what her life turned out to be.

Ichio-yo's delineation of women characters was especially truthful as well as charming in style. Some of her best-known stories are "Muddy Inlet"--"Passing Clouds Out of One's Self"--"A Branch Road".

Ichio-ya had that power so rare among even great artists, the power of revealing all that language holds and leaving the immeasurable misery of genuine tragedy to the imagination of those who can walk serenely with Buddha or suffer with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Thus, in the writings of this genius, the imaginative literature of Japan made an immense gain. It was brought nearer to life. The terrible power of restraint was demonstrated in a manner never to be forgotten, another example of the fact that the essence of Japanese literature is suggestion and not expression.*

There are only two women authors of this period that Tsurumi felt important enough to mention in his lecture on modern literature at Columbia University in 1926--Ichio-ya, the novelist, and Madame Yosano, whose pen name is Aki-ko, the most famous living poet in Japan.

Three Japanese woman authors, who have written books in English, are especially well-known in America--Baroness Shidzue Ishimoto, Mrs. Etsu Sugimoto and her daughter Mrs. Chiyono Kiyooka.

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Tsurumi, Yusuke, Present Day Japan, p.71

JAPANESE WOMEN POETS

To a goddess, Iza-nami-no-Mikoto is given the honor of composing the first poem in the Japanese language. When she met the god, Iza-nagi-no-Mikoto, she exclaimed:

What joy beyond compare
To see a man so fair!

This poem is recorded in the Nihongi, or Chronicles of Japan, completed in 720 A.D. The Nihongi contains 132 and the Kojiki, 111 poems, many of which were composed by women. These were written when none of the European languages, much less their literary products, existed.

In the history of Japanese literature, the period from the Mythical Age to the close of the 7th century is called the Archaic Era. All the people, high and low, composed poems. They were on love and war and their religious feasts and the other really important things in their daily lives. There was no written language, and the poems passed from mouth to mouth, being mostly songs sung with the festival dances. Over 180 of these poems were recorded in the Kojiki and the Nihongi.

We may question the authenticity of the poems attributed to the gods of the Mythological Age, but we cannot deny that of the poems of the Manyoshu, the first anthology, 760 A.D. This contains more than 4,000 poems written in exactly the same style and form as poetry in Japan has assumed through all the centuries following. These poems must have existed long before such an

anthology was made. Some critics believe that they date back to the 3rd century. It was during this period that Chinese literature came in through Korea, but, strange to say, these poems show little or no Chinese influence.

In the records of the reign of Nintoku, the last of the legendary Emperors, 313-399 A.D., we find that the Emperor and the Empress were both famous for their poetical talents. The Empress, Iha-no-himi, was even more famous as a poet than her husband. A large number of her verses were written expressing jealousy and sorrow because the Emperor had deserted her for a younger consort. Two of her long poems, one of 17 and one of 13 lines, are in the Kojiki, and three poems of five lines are recorded in the Manyoshu and are classified as the oldest of that collection. Miyamori Asataro lists Empress Nintoku as one of the five great poets of this early period. In Curtis Hidden Page's "Essay on Japanese Poetry" we find an example of the poems expressing her sorrow over losing her husband's love.

Now, if it be even so,
That his love for me is done,
To some mountain peak I'll go,
For my pillow find a stone,
There to lie--and die--alone.*

Akai-ko

Among his "Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry Ancient and Modern", Miyamori Asataro includes a poem of the 5th century, written by the poetess, Akai-ko. She is known because of a charming story about her meeting the Emperor Yuryaku.

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Page, Curtis Hidden, Japanese Poetry, p.63

The Emperor took an excursion into the country and noticed the beautiful girl washing clothes on the bank of the river, Miwa. He stopped and asked her whose child she was. She told him her name was Akai-ko and that her parents lived in Hiketa. The Emperor said to her, "Do not marry, my girl. I will send for you", and then went on his way. The girl ran home and told her parents of her happy fortune and waited months and years for her summons to the Palace. She refused marriage and grew into an old woman. Her one desire now was to see the Emperor again and to tell him how she had faithfully awaited his command. At last she could stand it no longer, so she prepared presents and went to the Palace and asked to see His Majesty. The Emperor saw her, was amazed and ashamed at her story and, being deeply moved, he spoke to her in poetical words expressing his great regret and admiration at her loyalty. The old woman wept both in joy and sorrow, and her reply, too, was in extemporary verse. The Emperor then ordered that she have every comfort during the remainder of her life. Akai-ko went sorrowfully home. The verse in which she replied to the Emperor is as follows:

Lotus Flowers

In the inlet of Kusaka--
 Oh, the lotus flowers there!
 How I envy the fresh and pretty
 Maidens like those flowers fair!

Basil Hall Chamberlain translates the poem without any attempt at rhyme: "Oh! How enviable is she who is in her bloom, like the flowering lotus--lotus of the inlet, of the inlet of Kusaka."

THE NARA PERIOD

During this period the oldest and greatest anthology, the Manyoshu, or "The Collection of Myriad Leaves", was compiled. The collection contains 4,496 poems of which 4,173 are tanka (short poems), 262 naga-uta (long poems) and 61 sedoka (head-repeating poems). The collection contains poems written during the 400 years before the anthology was completed in 760 A.D. There are 631 poets named in the anthology--Emperors and Empresses, Princes and Princesses, peasants and beggars. There are poems written by 70 different women. This collection is called the Manyoshu because the poems were recorded in Manyo (cumbersome Chinese ideographs). These were so very difficult that even highly educated people found it very hard to read the anthology. But in the latter part of the 8th century, the kana (a simplified syllabary), came into use and was combined with the Manyo characters. The adoption of this new form of transcription "rendered poetry a written literature and a thing to be read, not to be only sung and transmitted from mouth to mouth, which was a great advance in culture."* Even yet, to acquire a mastery of the few Manyo characters used in poems takes much study. Poetry composition became more and more an aristocratic accomplishment.

On the whole, the characteristics of the Manyo poetry are straightforwardness of thought, power of emotion, force of rhythm and simplicity of expression; in a word, naturalism is the

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Miyamori, Asataro, Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, p.21

keynote of these poems. The Manyo style is highly appreciated by present-day poets.**

Certain rhetorical devices came into use in this period--Makura-Kotoba, "pillow-words", Kake-Kotoba, or "pivot-words" and Engo, or "related-words", also alliteration and a kind of refrain.

Curtis Hidden Page in his "Historical Essay on Japanese Poetry" gives a few examples of short poems of 31 syllables from the Manyoshu. Among them are four, written by the Lady of Kasa to Otomo no Yakamochi.

The bell that biddeth all men sleep
Maketh me wake, and keep,
My prince, for thee,
Vigils of memory.

It well may be that I
Deserve your scorn and hate...
But the flowering tree at my gate,
How can you pass it by?

At earliest dawn I wake...
But cannot sleep again for any sake!
Alack! What can one do
To still the shrill cuckoo?

I must go to some land
Where no cuckoos are...
It so racks me with longing
Their song to hear.*

The cuckoo is the symbol of true love, whether returned or scorned.

It is an interesting fact that it was in this Nara period that so-called professional poets appeared. Among these were several women--Princess Nukada Otomono, Sakanoue no Iratsume and Kasa no Iratsume.

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*Page, Curtis Hidden, Japanese Poetry, p.27

**Miyamori, Asataro, Op. cit., p.108

Empress Jito

An early poetess honored in the Manyoshu was Empress Jito who reigned from 690-696 A.D. Four of her poems are included in this early anthology. The best known is:

Summer Has Come

The spring has gone;
The summer seems to have come round;
Behold! White clothes are aired
Upon the heavenly Mt. Kaga.

Verses ending with a noun, like this one, were in great vogue later, in the period of the Shin-Kokin-Shu, but they are rarely found in the Manyoshu. This verse is also found in the Kokin-Shu and the Hyakunin-Isshu--"A Hundred verses by a Hundred Poets"--but is arbitrarily altered in two places in these anthologies. In the altered form it is more complicated in sense but inferior to the original form.*

Princess Nukada

Another royal poetess of the 7th century was Princess Nukada. She was the consort of Emperor Kobun, and after the Emperor's death she became the consort of Emperor Temmu. She was also a favorite of Emperor Tenchi. Many of her poems may be found in the Manyoshu. One of her best-known poems is called "Longing for the Emperor Omi". It was composed while waiting for her lover, the Emperor Tenchi, who was expected to call at her house.

While with longing I waited--
Waited for you--
Swaying the bamboo blinds of my house,
The autumn wind blew.

Another, "The Tide, Too, Is Up", Princess Nukada composed when the Imperial ship was about to set sail for Nigitazu. The Empress

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Miyamori, Asataro, Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, p.108

Saimei, 655-661 A.D., undertook an expedition against Shiragi (an old name for Korea), and went aboard the ship along with her retinue of which Princess Nukada was a member. The verse in Japanese has a powerful rhythm well-fitted to the theme, according to Miyamori.

Here we have waited at Nigitazu
For the rise of the moon, to put to sea.
The moon is up, the tide is high;
Away! Let us row out speedily.

Lady Ishikawa (7th century)

There is a charming love story left to the reader's imagination in Prince Otsu's poem sent to Lady Ishikawa and in her reply. Prince Otsu wrote:

While I stood waiting for my dear,
I grew wet with the dew
Dripping down from the mountain trees;
Yes, quite wet with the dew.

Lady Ishikawa's reply:

Would that I could become
The dewdrops of the mountain tree
With which you grew so wet
Waiting for me.

Another pair of poems called "The Horse", and the reply to it, are most interesting. "The Horse" was written by an anonymous, poor, travelling-merchant's wife.

Along the Yamashiro road
The other woman's husbands travel all by horse
But mine on foot must hold his course.
Seeing this sight I weep for him,
My heart is pained.
Oh, husband, this bright mirror take,
Which was my mother's last bequest--
This scarf, too, like the wings of dragonflies;

And with them purchase you a horse;
'Tis my request.

A woman's mirror was said to be her soul, just as a samurai's sword was considered to be his. It was a great sacrifice which this woman was ready to make for her husband's comfort. His answer was a kind one.

Suppose I buy a horse;
You, then, must walk while I ride,
Though we tread a stony track,
My dear, let us walk side by side.

Chikami no Otome (8th century)

Otome was the wife of Nakatomi no Yakamori, a courtier and poet. Yakamori was exiled on account of an intrigue he carried on with Otome while she was still a court lady. The evening of his departure Otome sent him this verse:

Would that there were a heavenly fire
Which could contract into a heap
And burn complete the long, long way
You have to walk in sorrow deep.

Lines Sent to Yakamori in Exile

The strange land is an ill place
For my dear to live in, they say;
So come home, speedily come,
Ere for love I pine away.

Another famous anonymous poem by a woman belonging to this period is found in the Manyoshu.

Thousands of Little Birds

About the gateway of my house,
To eat the berries of the nettle tree,
Thousands of little birds come flocking, but
You do not come to me.

There are a number of poems of this period which are unsigned that might have been written by a woman or by a man. The following verse is thought by many critics to have been written by a woman to her old infirm husband, though, as some point out, it might have been written by a retainer to his lord.

The Elixir of Life

Oh, how I wish
The ladder to heaven
Were still longer,
The high mountain
Were still higher!
Then I would climb the sky
And beg the god of the moon
For his rare elixir,
That I might bring it soon
Down to my lord and master
To make him grow younger.

Otomo-no-e Iratsume

When her younger daughter was married to a warrior and poet, Otomo wrote this verse.

On the Marriage of a Daughter

Ah! I have handed over
The jewel to its owner;
Well, let us two sleep together--
I and my pillow.

She was a representative poetess of the first half of the Nara period, and in the Manyoshu there are six of her long poems and 73 short ones. She has more poems in this old anthology than any other poetess. She married three times and survived her last husband, which accounts for many of her verses being love poems.

I said I could not love you,
But despite these words on my part,

I cannot but love. Like Hanezu dye,
How changeable is my heart!

The Hanezu is a kind of plum from whose flower a very deep dye was made in ancient times.

Abe no Iratsume

Nothing is known certainly of this poet's life, but it is believed that her lover was a high government official whose poems also appear in the Manyoshu.

A Verse Sent to a Lover

My heart and soul
O, my dear, are sewn in the seams
Of the clothes you wear.
Into every stitch
O, my own,
Of the clothes you wear,
My very heart is sewn.

Ki no Iratsume (8th century)

Ki no Iratsume was the daughter of a court poet. After her husband's death she became the favorite of Otomo no Yakamochi and sent many poetical messages to him.

You well might fail to call on me
When all is wrapped in gloom,
But will you not come out tonight--
This moonlight night with fair plum bloom?

THE HEIAN PERIOD

(794-1185 A.D.)

People of the Court in this period became very much interested in Chinese poetry. Since the last half of the Nara period, Chinese literature had been very popular. Early in the Heian period the court nobles took to writing Chinese verse to the neglect of pure Japanese poetry. This lasted until the middle of the 9th century when Japanese poets of merit began to appear again, and for the next two centuries there was the greatest output of verse that Japan has ever known.

There appeared between 951 and 1205 A.D. eight official poetry anthologies: The Kokinshu, "A Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern"--Gosenshu, "Later Selection of Poems"--Shuishu, "A Collection of Poems Left Uncollected"--Kinyoshu, "Golden Leaves Collection"--Shikwashu, "Word-Blossom Collection"--Senzaishu, "Thousand Years Collection"--Shin Kokinshu, "New Ancient and Modern Collection". These anthologies were combined into a series called The Hachi-dai-shu, "Collection of the Eight Reigns".

There also were many private collections such as "The Popular Anthology" and "The Anthology of Songs". About this time, too, a list of 36 chief poets was made, probably by Fujiwara no Kiuto who was the editor of the Shuishu. These 36 poets were greatly honored by this selection and were often portrayed by Japanese artists and also by designers of color prints. There

were many collected works of individual poets called Kashu or "House Collections". There are such collections of poems written by several noble ladies--the Princess Ise, Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shonagon.

The poems being very short, the numbers ran up into the millions; actually millions of tanka were collected. One very interesting collection, published in 1235 A.D., was The Hyaku-nin-issu, "Hundred-Poem-Collection", and it gives one poem from each of 100 famous poets. This collection, too, has been much used by artists, who have illustrated everyone of the poems many times. A game of picture and poem cards, like our game of "Authors", was made from it and is even today the most popular game in Japan. It is played especially during the long New Year's holiday season. Poets became so important and respected during this period that the great Hitomaru was deified and worshipped as the god of poetry, and two temples were erected in his name, one at Ichino-moto and one at Akashi near Kobe.

Ona no Komachi (834-880 A.D.)

Ona no Komachi was the most famous poetess of the classical 9th century. Several well-known dramas deal with her life, depicting her beauty, cleverness and pride during her youth and her unhappy and deserted old age. One of the best of these, Sotoba Komachi, has been translated by Mr. Arthur Waley in "The Nō Plays of Japan". One of the best-known of her poems is called "Finality".

The fairest flowers most quickly fall,
 Beaten with rain...
 And yet more vain
 My beauty fadeth once for all
 And will not bloom again.

Lady Komachi's tragic old age is the subject of many legends and plays. She flourished in her young life but died a beggar's death. Miyamori says that Ona no Komachi was the most beautiful Japanese woman that ever lived.

Flower in the Heart

Alas! It is the flower
 Within a man's heart
 Which fades without signs
 Of a fading color.

Wakameda Takeji's translation in blank verse is lovelier. "The human heart is an unseen and strange flower whose color is so apt to change."

Lady Ise (9th century)

Lady Ise, daughter of the lord of Yamato, was famous for her beauty and her literary gifts. She was a favorite of Prince Atsuyoshi, and their daughter was the famous poetess, Nakatsukasa. Later she bore a son to the Emperor Uda. She is one of the famous "Six-and-Thirty Poetical Geniuses". More than 20 of her poems were included in the Kokinshu, more than 60 in the Gosen-shu, and many were printed in other anthologies. One of her poems included in Page's "Essay on Japanese Poetry" is especially well-known:

Would that my times away from thee
 Might always be
 Short as the sections of a bamboo tree
 That grows in stony sand beside the sea.

Miyamori includes two of her poems in his "Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry".

Wild Geese Flying Home

See, those wild geese are flying home,
Leaving behind spring mists that rise round,
It must be that those birds are wont to dwell
In places where no flowers are found.

The poetess wonders why the geese leave the beautiful spring mists, the soft warm weather and the flowering trees and plants. Are they accustomed to dwelling in flowerless, cheerless places?

The Joints of Reeds

And must I pass away
Nor meet you once before I go--
E'en for a time as short as the joints
Of reeds that grow in Naniwa Bay?

Miyamori says that this poem is extremely elegant in phraseology, and its tone is gracefully feminine. Much of the beauty of a Japanese poem is lost in the translation.

Lady Fujiwara no Yoruka

This poetess was of the famous Fujiwara family. Her father was the Keeper of the Privy Seal. She served five Emperors as tenji or "Maid of Honor of the Highest Rank". Her poems are found in the Kokin-shu and the Gosen-shu.

Cherry Blossoms

The spring was leaving speedily
Before I knew, shut in my room;
Alas! Already it has faded,
The long awaited cherry bloom.

Lady Yoruka was ill and, seeing a spray of cherry flowers withered in her room, she realized that the cherry flowers in Tokyo must have faded also.

Empress of Niho

This poetess was the consort of Emperor Seiwa and the mother of Emperor Yozei. She was deposed from the position of Empress Dowager because of a clandestine love affair. She wrote this poem during her great trouble.

The Tears of Uguisu

Spring has already come round
While on the ground lies snow;
The frozen tears of the uguisu
Soon in the soft warm breeze will thaw.

This is a very pathetic poem, Miyamori points out. He says that there is a hidden meaning; that even though the uguisu's tears would thaw out, her tears will never melt.

Tsurayuki's Daughter

No name in early Japanese literature is better known than Ki no Tsurayuki. He was especially skilled in calligraphy; a talent especially appreciated by the Japanese. He was also a famous author, writing both poetry and prose, but he is especially famous as the compiler of the Kokin-shu and the Shuisen-shu. He also wrote the Tosa Diary and is the editor of a very famous volume called "Selections from the Manyoshu". He was one of the 36 poetical geniuses.

One day the Emperor Murakami (947-967 A.D.), sorrowing over the death of a beautiful red plum tree in his garden, commanded one of his courtiers to find another tree just like it. The courtier found one in a garden nearby and asked the owner, in the name of his Sovereign, if he might take the tree. His

attendants, however, did not wait for her answer and began digging it up. The lady was greatly perturbed, because a pair of uguisu were nesting in the tree. She asked the men to stop digging and to take a note to the Emperor. They complied with her wish, and the Emperor was greatly moved by her note, which was in the form of a poem. The Emperor inquired the name of the woman and was much surprised to find that she was the daughter of the famous poet, Ki no Tsurayuki. The woman, herself, was a famous poetess. The poem which she sent to the Emperor was this:

The Uguisu's Home

Since 'tis my Lord's command,
Most humbly I obey;
But if the uguisu inquire
For their home, Oh! what shall I say?

Izumi Shikibu (10th century)

One of the "Thirty-six Poetical Geniuses of the Mediaeval Age" and one of the "Five Poets of Pear Tree Hall", Izumi Shikibu is also one of the most famous women of the Heian period. She is especially noted for her "Diary", which is a masterpiece. She and Lady Murasaki were serving as ladies-in-waiting in the Palace. In Lady Murasaki's "Diary" we find a vivid description of this poetess. Lady Murasaki criticises Shikibu frankly and tells how thoroughly she disliked and mistrusted her. This was probably a case of jealousy, as both women were very exceptionally capable and talented authors. During her court life, Izumi Shikibu was lady-in-waiting to Empress Ichijo. She was a

favorite of both Prince Tametaka and of his younger brother,
Prince Atsumichi. She was, later, the wife of the lord of Tango.

The Snow in the Garden

If he whom I await should come
This moment, Oh! what should I do?
I dread to have it trodden on--
The garden snow!

Fireflies

While I am wrapped in thought,
The fireflies of the marsh world seem to be
My soul, caught up and wandering
Forth out of me.

Flowers of Spring

Suppose that nowhere else, but in my garden only,
Flowers of spring should bloom--
Then even the man who has neglected me
To gaze on them would surely come.

Lady Kan-in (10th century)

In the Kokin-shu there is an elegy written by Lady Kan-in--
a court lady of the Engi era, 901-923 A.D.

An Elegy

A thousand times must we deplore
The lost will never come to life again;
Even as flowing water runs away
Returning never more.

Lady Nakatsukasa

This poetess was a daughter of Lady Ise and was honored as
one of the 36 poetical geniuses. Her poems are quoted in almost
all of the Imperial anthologies.

Pining for a Dead Child

Before they bloomed, I longed for them,
After they bloomed, I mourned that they must fade;
The mountain cherry flowers
Sorrow alone for my poor heart have made.

Murasaki Shikibu (947-1031 A.D.)

Murasaki Shikibu was a famous poetess and the greatest of novelists. She was the granddaughter of a famous poet, as well. When her husband died, she went to the Palace as lady-in-waiting to the Empress Ichijo. Her eldest daughter also became a famous poetess. She wrote a famous Diary. Her poems were collected into a volume called "A Collection of Murasaki Shikibu's Verses". She is the author of the greatest novel ever written in the Japanese language and was honored as one of the "Five Poetical Geniuses of Pear Tree Hall".

Life

You would have nothing to lament
About this life of ours,
Regarding it as you regard
The mountain cherry flowers.

The Waves of the Bay

Listen! The billows of the bay
Sound like my sobs of passionate longing;
Because, methinks, the wind blows from the place
Where my beloved is dwelling.

Akazome no Emon (11th century)

Little is known of this famous poetess, but she ranks high as one of the 36 poetical geniuses. She left a large collection of her own verses.

Today and Tomorrow

Tomorrow I shall be
Forgotten quite by thee;
Oh well, if I might die today
Whilst yet thou lovest me!

A Mountain Road Covered with Fallen Petals

Loathe am I to tread on the flowers,
But can otherwise go no further;
Oh! how much they torture my feelings--
These mountain cherry blossoms!

Lady Koshikibu

Ko is a syllable used in Japanese to express the idea of "junior" or "minor". This poetess is the daughter of the famous Izumi Shikibu. She is really a poetical genius in her own right, but many jealous women in the Court accused of her being helped in her writing by her famous mother. One time when her mother was away she was asked to take part in a poetry contest. A few days before the contest a young Prince insolently asked her if she had yet heard from her mother, implying that her mother would send her a poem to enter in the contest. The daughter, to the Prince's surprise and shame, answered in this famous bit of poetical repartee.

The road along Ikuno Plain
And over Mt. O-e
Is so long that no letter as yet has come
From Ama-no-hashidate.

This poem is so famous that it is included in the collection, "A Hundred Verses by a Hundred Poets". It is notable because of its ready wit, rather than for its worth from a literary

standpoint. In the original, the last two lines are full of hidden meaning and plays on words.

Lady Sagami (11th century)

This poetess, also, is one of the "Thirty-six Poetical Geniuses of the Mediaeval Age", and she has left a large collection of poems.

The Fan

I have forgot--
So cool the autumn breezes blow
Where I have put the fan which, till my arm was weary,
I used so short a time ago.

Shizuka (12th century)

Shizuka is one of the heroines who is loved in Japanese song and drama. She was a very beautiful Kyoto dancing girl and the mistress of the famous Minamoto no Yoshitsune. Yoshitsune helped his half brother, Yoritomo, to establish the Shogunate at Kamakura. Yoritomo, after accepting his brother's help, became insanely jealous of his popularity, and Yoshitsune had to flee to the mountains. He took Shizuka with him but later, fearing for her safety, forced her to start back to Kyoto. On the way, Yoritomo's troops overtook her and tried to make her reveal Yoshitsune's whereabouts, but she would not betray her lover. She was taken to Yoritomo's Palace. He and his wife gave a party and asked Shizuka to dance for the guests. She could not refuse, but as she danced she sang two songs of her own composition, weeping for her banished husband. The warriors were moved to tears by the sad verses but Yoritomo was very

angry. His wife, however, took Shizuka's part, stayed his anger and made him give rich presents to Shizuka. When Shizuka's son was born, the hardhearted Shogun had the child murdered. The mother then became a nun and retired to the monastery to pray for her loved ones. The only verse given by Miyamori in his Masterpieces is called "Mt. Yoshino". It is taken from the Zen-ken Kojitsu, "Anecdotes of Ancient Worthies".

How I long for the man
 Who climbed Mt. Yoshino,
 Plunging through the white snow
 Lying thick on its heights!

Lady Tango

Lady Tango's poems are quoted in practically all of the Imperial anthologies, though little is known of her life. She was a lady-in-waiting to the consort of Emperor Go-Toba.

The Bright Moon on the Lake

The boat which rode
 Off Karasaki all the night
 Has vanished quite and left no trace
 But still the moon stays bright.

THE KAMAKURA (1186-1332 A.D.), MUROMACHI (1336-1573 A.D.)
AND MOMOYAMA (1556-1602 A.D.) PERIODS

Miyamori Asataro in his "Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, Ancient and Modern" combines these three periods, both in his Essay and in his lists of poems. He holds that in no other period did so many good poets appear.

There had arisen during the preceding period a great deal of disputation about the various forms of poetry. Three schools of poetry had been organized. Fujiwara no Shunzei, a very remarkable poet, was able to combine the different factions into a new style called the Yugen-tai, or "Profound Style", and by this standard he compiled the Senzai-shu, "An Anthology for All Ages", 1187 A.D. This collection surpassed all others except the Kokin-shu. Teika, Shunzei's son, was also a great poet, and he developed his father's theory, and together "through their long lives by constant writing and teaching the unification of the poetic world was realized".* In the list of prominent poets of that day, before 1300 A.D., several women poets are honored: Princess Shikishi, Lady Kunai and Shunzei's daughter.

In 1205 A.D. several poets compiled the Shin Kokin-shu, "A New Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern". This was revised many times, and 30 years later the Okki text was published. This anthology included 1980 short poems in 20 volumes--five

*
 Miyamori, Asataro, Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, Ancient and Modern, p.27

volumes devoted to love poems and two to Buddhist and Shinto poems. The latter were a new feature.

In beauty of diction, in smoothness of rhythm and in ingenuity of technique the Shin Kokin-shu is unsurpassed. The feature most characteristic is its profound style, called in Japanese yugentai. The word, yugen, means profound and difficult for the common comprehension. A poem in this style is exceedingly suggestive leaving much unexpressed to be filled up by the reader's imagination and association of ideas. In consequence, at first sight, many poems in this anthology seem to be simple portrayals of objective scenes, but a careful perusal will show them to be symbolic poems of a high order. In a word, symbolism and suggestiveness are the keynotes of the Shin Kokin-shu.*

During the next 200 years, 1232-1438 A.D., there were 13 anthologies published, and these with the eight preceding made 21 official anthologies published before 1438 A.D. The collections contained nearly 1600 poems each, and these were merely the few chosen to be handed down to posterity. Many women's names are found in the list of poets.

The Fujiwara family, who were all-powerful for three generations, were the official editors of these Imperial anthologies. They were considered the unrivaled authorities in poetry. The Fujiwara eventually divided into three branches, the Nijo, Kyogoku and the Reizei. They rivaled one another as public instructors in poetry. The Nijo and the Kyogoku families were especially jealous of each other, and attacked each other violently, yet neither could boast a single poem of merit.

In the Muromachi period only the Reizei family survived,

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Miyamori, Asataro, Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, Ancient and Modern, p.27

and there was not one real poet among them, either. Men's minds were taken up with warrior ideals and codes and these are not poetical. There were a few very ordinary women poets in this long period. The Samurai woman was taught to shine up her lord's armour and to learn to use his weapons, often following her lord into battle. She must always be able to defend herself and take her own life when duty or honor called. In Miyamori's list of poetesses for this long period of nearly 500 years only two women are mentioned, the daughter of Fujiwara Notoshinari and Eifuku-Mon-in, and they are almost unknown among scholars and lovers of poetry. Kunai-kyo and Princess Shikishi, also, belong to this period.

Kunai-kyo (12th century)

Kunai-kyo was famous both as painter and as poetess. She was a lady-in-waiting at the Court of the Emperor Go-Toba. She spent herself so relentlessly in writing poetry that she was hurried into a premature death.

Young Grasses

By the light or deeper green
Of fresh grasses of the field,
Late or early thaw of snow
Is well revealed.

Miyamori says that the original Japanese of this poem has a very pleasing rhythm.

Princess Shikishi

This Princess was another who combined the talents of painting and poetizing. She left a large collection of verses. She

was the daughter of Emperor Go-Shirakawa and served in the Kamo Shinto Shrine but later became the Buddhist priestess, Nyoho. She seems to have had a love affair with Prince Kore-akira, in which they exchanged these two poems.

Unconfessed Love

Oh, my soul's thread, if long thou canst not last,
'Twere better thou shouldst e'en snap now.
If I should longer live, I fear, endurance weakening,
I could not fail my love to show.

A Reply by Prince Kore-akira

Oh sad! Until the double cherry bloom
Began to fade,
Of coming to your house, Oh heartless one,
No word you said.

THE YEDO OR TOKUGAWA PERIOD

(1603-1867 A.D.)

A strong effort was made at the beginning of this period to return to the ancient Manyo style. A few wrote in pure Manyo, but most wrote in a combination of old Manyo and Kokin and developed a new, refined and melodious style. Thus a new school called the Yedo School was formed, and soon became very influential.

In opposition to the Yedo School there arose a group under the leadership of Kagawa Kageki (1768-1843) who maintained that "since poems are spontaneous outbursts of emotion, it is not necessary to imitate ancient poets--at the same time a poem must possess a harmonious melody which springs from the poet's sincerity of heart."* Kageki attached great importance to the Kokin-shu on account of its beautiful melody. Kageki used the nom de plume of Kei-en or "The Garden of Katsura Trees", so his school came to be known as The Kei-en School. It enjoyed undisputed sway over all Japan during this period. One poetess, Takabatake Shikibu, is quite famous as a member of this group.

Many innovations in poetry making were recorded during the Yedo period, but it was almost impossible for the followers of Kageki to get rid of the old ancient forms. There were a few who branched off on their own fresh and easy styles-writing on everyday subjects. One woman, only, is mentioned in this

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Miyamori, Asataro, Masterpieces of Japanese Poetry, Ancient and Modern, p.33

special group.

Nomura Bōtō (1806-1867)

When Nomura Bōtō was 53 years old she became a nun and took the nom de plume of "Botoni". She studied under famous poets and became very famous herself. Being in sympathy with a group of Revolutionists who wished to overthrow the Shogunate, she gave refuge to many of these rebels in her own home which was in a remote village. She was finally banished to a small island as a political offender but was rescued by two of her own group. Many years after her death, in 1893, she was honored by a high court rank. She wrote a famous poem called Uguisu and sent it to a friend who was in prison because of a political offense.

Because of their peerless sweet notes,
The uguisu must undergo
The sorrow of cage confinement.
Alas! With men, too, it is so.

A Caged Uguisu

The uguisu in the cage
Would never meet
So hard a fate if its unrivaled notes
Were not so sweet.

A Friendless Man

Though he be in a village where
The cherry flowers richly glow
A man who has no friend--
How lonely he must go.

Yanagiwara Yasuko (1783-1866)

Yanagiwara is the greatest woman pupil of the famous poet Kageki who founded the Kei-en School.

Departed Spring

In less than the space of a dozing dream,
Spring is away,
And already, half hidden among green leaves,
Butterflies play.

Wild Geese Flying Home

Behold the wild geese flying back
In hurry and in flurry!
Maybe in Koshiji are found
Some flowers fairer than the cherry.

The poetess here speaks ironically of the wild geese which fly north before the cherry blooms. She is wondering if they go thinking they may find a flower lovelier than the cherry blossom.

Kaga no Chiyo

Curtis Hidden Page gives a whole chapter in his book on Japanese poetry to the poetess Chiyo. He states that she is one "who was original in her use of the Japanese lyric, putting into it simply and directly the substance of her own life."*

Chiyo came from a family who took great interest in her education, training her in poetry-making from early childhood. Once Rogenbo, a famous teacher of poetry, stayed overnight in her home. He was asked to give the child a lesson in hokku writing. He gave her a subject, "The Cuckoo", and then rolled up in his bed and slept all through the night. The next morning he awoke to find Chiyo sitting by his bed waiting to read her poem to him.

Cuckoo!
Again cuckoo!
Again the daylight, too!

*

Page, Curtis Hidden, Japanese Poetry, p.134

Rogenbo told the family he had nothing to teach her about hokku but that from her he might learn a thing or two about courtesy (hokku).

When Chiyo married she wrote a poem, as was the custom, as a wedding gift to her husband.

The persimmon, lo!
No one can tell till he tastes it!
Marriage is even so.

Her husband died after a very few years of happy married life, leaving her with a little son. She never remarried. Shortly after she became a widow she wrote:

I sleep....I wake....
How wide
The bed with none beside.

Her little son died, too. Her two poems expressing her sorrow are, according to Page, "among the most typical, perhaps among the best, of Japanese lyrics".

I wonder in what fields today
He chases dragonflies in play
My little boy--who ran away.

Drear autumn winds beat down the lingering leaves.
Wet are the forest waves, and wet my sleeves.
Oh the sound of the wind through the shoji.

Two of Chiyo's poems are very well-known to foreigners. In Japanese poetry the willow tree is a symbol of a graceful, gracious lady. Chiyo was very stout. One day she went to a rich home to teach, and as she heard the maids making fun of her figure, she turned on them and spoke these witty lines:

The willow tree
May an armful be,
But none the less a willow.

The most famous of all her hokku is one called "The Morning-Glory". Chiyo had no servant and went herself to the well to draw her water. One day she found a morning-glory which had twined itself around the ropes and had blossomed there. She could not bear to break the vine, so she went to her neighbor's house and asked for water in the words of this poem.

The morning-glory
Has stolen my well-sweep today.
Gift-water, pray!

This poem is used by foreigners probably more than any other in portrayal of the gentle character of the Japanese and his love of flowers and of all nature.

In a poem of seven words she gives the essence of all Oriental philosophy.

All things that seem
Are but
One dreamer's dream.

Rengetsu

Michi Kawai in her recent book, "Japanese Women Speak", written for the Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, tells us of a poetess who lived in the late Yedo period. She was a Buddhist nun named Rengetsu, which means Lotus Moon. She was a member of a Samurai family in the province of Ise and had evidently been one of the few to be trained in the Chinese classics during her girlhood. She retired into the nunnery after the death of her husband and daughter to pray for the welfare of their souls. Her beauty and talent were attractions

to many men, but she resisted all temptations to go back into the world and sold pottery to support herself.

It was at this time that Perry came to Japan. The Tokugawa clans were fighting a civil war, and Rengetsu not only prayed for the salvation of her loved ones, but also that her countrymen might unite, calm the frightened people, answer the demands of the outside world and plan for an orderly and prosperous new Japan. She wrote poems asking that America would rain upon Japan blessings and goodwill and not enmity and destruction. This is an example of the very prevalent fashion in Japanese poetry of play on words. Ame, the first three letters in America, means "rain" in Japanese. The poem may be translated thus:

Refreshing is the torrent of April
rain (America)
Promising blessing upon the thirsty
land.

Another poem by Rengetsu:

Wet are my sleeves
Thinking of the cold bodies left on
the road,
Someone's dear sons never to return.

THE TOKYO PERIOD

(1868 to the Present)

After the Restoration, Japan was very busy with the introduction of foreign learning and culture and the establishing of many schools. In 1869 the Emperor Meiji revived the ancient custom of holding a New Year's Poetry Party in the Imperial Palace. In 1874 he started the custom of inviting all the people of Japan to send in poems for this party. The most excellent would be read, after hearing those of the Emperor and Empress and the Princes of the Blood. Poetry making thus came back to the common people after years of being buried under the difficult Manyo characters.

In 1888 Emperor Meiji established a Bureau of Poetry in the Imperial Household Department. Meiji and his Empress were brilliant poets themselves. Many poetry societies were formed and poetry magazines started; even poetry schools were opened. Many famous women poets again were welcomed into literary circles. In the year 1922, twenty-six thousand persons submitted poems in the annual contest, many of whom were women. In 1921 the prize went to an American woman, the wife of the Military Attache. It was sent in anonymously, and the fact that it received the prize proved to the skeptical that the committee of critics were indeed sincere and ready to give the prize to the best, irrespective of rank or sex. The subject, as is always

the case, had been chosen by the Emperor and published all over the kingdom. This year he chose the theme, "Before the Shrine of Ise at Dawn". Mrs. Burnett's poem delighted the critics.

In the dawn of the New Year
Before the ancient portals of Eternal Truth
Behold--in changeless Majesty
The Light of God.

Curtis Hidden Page points out a new note expressing a modern social consciousness as the chief characteristic of the 20th century poetry. This note is often felt in the poems of the Empress, the consort of Meiji.

Nightly upon my sleeves
The dew falls heavy, while my spirit yields
To yearning thought, and grieves
Over our people, toiling in the fields.

A stream unpent flows on in gentle fashion,
But, stop its course, it gathers strength and passion.
The people's will is gentle; but at length
If thwarted, it takes on torrent's strength.

The temple bell strikes midnight. Through the clear
And frosty air its chill notes reach me here
Where I lie close and warm. Its biting tone
Thrills through me to the bone,
Because I know
The distant sentinel
Hearing that selfsame bell,
Shivers anew....
I, in my thick futons, ache through and through
To think what chill he feels pacing to and fro.

Yosano Akiko

Tsurumi Yusukey in his lectures at Columbia University in 1926 spoke on modern Japanese Literature. He paid signal honor to a woman poet, Madame Yosano, who wrote under her real name, Akiko

(The Child of A Gem). He said:

In 1901 the literary world of Japan received a sensation. A collection of short poems entitled Midare-gami, or, "The Flowing Hair", was published, and all Japan gasped in admiration. It was the work of a young girl of twenty-two. She later married a poet and is now known as Madame Yosano. Other poets of the day were under the influence of Western poets like Swinburne and Rosetti, but the poems of Akiko were entirely Japanese. She delved deeply into the classics of Japan and while giving expression to the spirit of her age used the old forms of her ancestors. By bold lines on the love, tumult and romance of human life she shocked old-fashioned people and gave unbounded joy to the young generation. She took immense delight in slighting the old formalities and narrow moralities. Her songs are full of bold denunciations of conventionalism. Her songs were soon on the lips of thousands. Her descriptive and imaginative poems are considered even better than her lyrical verses. She was particularly successful in singing about the beauty of Kyoto, the ancient capitol of Japan where, ten centuries ago, centered the Golden Age of Japanese literature.

She is still living and holds her face at the forefront in the Japanese world of poetry. Her achievements have been truly remarkable, particularly when we remember that she has found time to write so many masterpieces and assume the motherly care of her ten children. Moreover, she has also distinguished herself in the woman's movement in Japan, as well as in the educational world.*

Dr. Shio Sakanishi of The Department of Orientalia of the Congressional Library in Washington has lately published a volume of Yosano Akiko's poems called "Tangled Hair". As an introduction she has written a splendid sketch of the poet's life. She quotes a statement made by Akiko which she feels is the key to this poetess's genius.

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Tsurumi, Yusuke, Present Day Japan, p.76

I keenly long to be an individual and free.
 By a strange chance, I found my soul's mate,
 and with desperation I staked my whole life,
 thought and won my love. With this triumph,
 I escaped from the family bondage, which had
 so long imprisoned my personality. Moreover,
 that very moment, I found I could freely give
 artistic expression to my inner thoughts and
 feelings. Thus all at once, I won the three
 most precious things of life: courage, love,
 and poetry.*

Between the years 1901 and 1928 Akiko published 21 volumes of poetry. She and her poet-husband, Hiroshi Yosano, enjoyed a most unusual companionship. They often spent whole evenings composing poetry with a group of their friends who came almost nightly to their home. They travelled together in Europe and later together founded a girl's school in Tokyo in which Akiko acted as dean. She was an ardent worker for the emancipation and higher education of women. With the death of Hiroshi their ideal companionship came to an end in 1935. Akiko still writes and keeps her place at the forefront of the world of Japanese poetry. Among her hundreds of poems it is difficult to choose a few favorites.

My Guests

One is a man of feeling,
 A deploer of the world's evils,
 Who lives only on adjectives.

The other is a man of all kinds of plans,
 A draughtsman with
 No experience in house building.

In this busy mid-December
 To keep company with you both is impossible.
 I must excuse myself and do my work.

Please, you two guests,
 Make yourselves at home.

*

Yosano, Akiko, Tangled Hair, Introduction by Shio Sakanishi, p.6

A Garment

If it were a matter of two garments,
 To take off one would be simple.
 Do not preach such obvious reasoning.

Now what I have is one,
 Only one garment to be shared with ten.
 After all what am I to do?

One Night

In every room
 Light a hundred candle-power light:
 In every vase
 Arrange poppies and roses:
 Not to comfort
 But to chastise.
 For here a woman
 ---Forgetting to praise,
 Forgetting to thank---
 Suddenly wished to weep
 Over a trifle.

The poems quoted in this chapter are translations by Miya-
mori Asataro unless otherwise stated.

JAPANESE WOMEN OF THE STAGE

The stage in Japan, as in Europe, is one of the oldest forms of education and entertainment. The theatre began with a religious motive, and the earliest forms of dramatic art were the songs and dances presented at the temple festivals. These were performed by men and women, both, but mostly by the priestesses. Religion in Japan has provided dancing and music for the amusement of the gods ever since the sun goddess was tempted to leave the cave where she was hiding to see the dance performed by the gods and goddesses in her honor.

These early dances were interpretive of sacred legend and emotion. Even now all Japanese dances are interpretations of poetry. As in all other countries, drama is separated into two classes, the sacred and the secular. In Japan the sacred retained its lyrical form and is known yet as the No. It is always serious and stands for real art. The secular is known as Kabuki and stands for play and is meant to amuse. In the early days the higher class audience was most loyal to the Nō, (as they still are), and the patrons of the Kabuki were usually the more vulgar of the population. Although women were the inventors and promoters of the Kabuki, it eventually became so immoral in tone that women were prohibited from acting on the stage, and from 1629 until the Modern Period men only were allowed to act.

During the 14th century the blind lute players, or Biwa Hoshi, roamed like troubadors from castle to castle chanting romances of chivalry, and the carefully trained dancing girls, or Shirabayoshi, precursors of the modern Geisha, brought new subjects and fresh skill to the interpretation of their respective arts. The Kioku-mai, or Memory Dance, was invented with closer coordination of music and movement to represent a battle, a love scene or a landscape. Many of these early dance songs are now blended with the Nō texts and form the Utai, which are as reverently studied and sung, even today, by men and women of Japan, as the works of classical composers are studied and sung by Europeans.

The transition from dance to drama took place in the 15th century. Buddhism gladly seized this instrument to inculcate its views and to enhance its prestige through this aristocratic amusement. The century actually opened with the dramatic dances performed by a woman, Okuni, the first Kabuki actress, who is generally regarded as the founder of the modern drama in Japan. The green sword (Shibai in Japanese), in front of the temple, on which Okuni performed, has given the name Shibai to all forms of the Japanese drama. Okuni was a fugitive priestess from the Kizuki temple in Izumo, and she gave this first performance in Kyoto, piously devoting part of the receipts to the repair of Onawiji's shrine, 1596.

Okuni of Izumo

According to the biography of Okuni of Izumo, she was a Miko, or sacred dancer. This book is now in the family archives of the Senge family, who have been hereditary ritualists of the shrine of Izumo.

Okuni left the shrine to go on a pilgrimage, according to her story, and visited many provinces, dancing and asking contributions toward the repair of the shrine. But when she got to Kyoto she received such an ovation that she never returned to Izumo. She joined the motley ranks of public entertainers then centering on the banks of the river Kamo, and set up her platform there. Kyoto was a city of half a million people. Brinkley in his history tells of the splendid palaces and stately residences of Kyoto in this period, and Okuni evidently got great ovations from her audiences of weavers, potters, fine lacquer makers and esthetic priests of the already rich and famous temples.

The old records say that she wore the nun's black silk robe with a small metal gong hanging around her neck, and, as she danced, she struck the gong with a small mallet. For some time her dances were greatly influenced by the sermons of the Buddhist priests, but she fell in love with a man named San Saburo and married him, and through his influence her roles were completely changed. San Saburo was a military man, but when he married Okuni he gave up his profession and joined her in her performances, becoming famous as an actor, himself. He had been

raised in a military family and had spent much time in his youth in the company of the family of his feudal lord. He was acquainted with the best in literature. When he saw the genius of Okuni, he visualized her in the roles of the Kyogen, the humorous skits inserted between the Nō plays for the relaxation of the audience. He taught her the popular songs of the day, composed new ones for her, and soon her simple Buddhist dances were forgotten, and she, herself, entered wholeheartedly into the new life. She became most successful when she took male parts, dancing with two swords through her belt, wearing a gorgeous military headdress.

Okuni's husband called these performances Kabuki, a word which was not new but had been used in the past to indicate a humorous performance. It now took on a new meaning and indicated anything pertaining to the popular stage. The word Shibai, the Japanese word for theatre, was also used first at this time, and means "to sit on the grass". The actress played on a stage, but the audience sat on the ground.

Okuni's program became more and more elaborate and difficult and was patronized enthusiastically by the nobles. She was even invited to entertain the great General Hideyasu in the Palace. It is recorded in 1601 that an Imperial Princess invited her to dance for the women of the Court. In 1607 she went to Tokyo and performed on the old Nō stages under the patronage of the shogun. She danced before Oda Nobunaga, the greatest General of that day, and she was invited to Kyushu by Kiyomasa.

There are accounts of her dancing and of her popularity, still extant, which were written by men who actually attended her performances at that early date.

Her husband retired from the stage and became a retainer of the Lord of Tsuyama and was killed in a dispute with another angry vassal. When Okuni became old she returned to Izumo shrine and spent her last days reciting sutras and writing poems.

Okuni Kabuki

From Okuni's time on dramatic troupes headed by women, and some formed only of women, were called Okuni Kabuki. They travelled all over Japan, though the center of the profession was in Kyoto. There is a record that one of these companies was hired as entertainers at the dedication of the famous Shizuoka Castle. A very unfortunate result of the popularity of these Okuni Kabuki was that the women of the prostitute quarters imitated them and formed similar troupes. A school to train actresses was opened, and male actors joined these women and put on many humorous performances that became most popular. The name, Onna Kabuki, Woman's Theatre, was taken by these prostitute groups, and soon the two sexes were playing together. Oftentimes the men took women's parts and the women took men's parts, a very risque thing at that time. Sometimes as many as 50 women danced together, and elaborate settings and costumes were introduced. The Samisen, a musical instrument like a guitar, appeared about this time, and women played it, forming the first orchestras in Japan. They sat on camp stools, which was

a great innovation.

As might be expected, the morals of the Onna Kabuki became very questionable. The women were prostitutes, and they took more and more freedom in their relationship with the men actors, and even with the men in the audiences, until the public began to look down on all actresses. In 1608 conditions became so bad that the Shogun banned all performances to the outskirts of the cities. Several court ladies were exiled for flirting with the actors, and in 1628 there was a shameful performance put on in the suburbs of Yedo which caused the theatre to be closed. The next year, 1629, Iyemitsu, the Shogun, forbade any female performance of any kind to be given. Women dancers, minstrels, actresses in the Kabuki and even those who sang in the puppet shows were excluded from the stage, and for 300 years attempts of women to return to the stage were met with violent disapproval.

Onna Gata

From the beginning of the male theatre down to the Meiji era we have a very specialized profession called Onna Gata--players who specialized in women's roles. This was a reversion to an old type, for long before Okuni introduced the Onna Kabuki the stage had been held entirely by men. Men liked these roles and found in them the greatest opportunity for a display of creative ability. The woman's hair and make-up was a complete disguise. The actor could completely lose his own identity and personality and create a new character, acting in a new world.

It became a serious lifetime study for many actors, and even today the most famous actors of China and Japan are Onna Gata.

The onna Gata became so skilled in the intricacies of women's costumes, that if a certain and admired Onna Gata tied his obi in a certain fashion, all the well-dressed women adopted this style and it became the vogue. For a long period the emphasis in Onna Gata roles was put on beauty, the costume and the ability to dance, but in the Genroku period the art underwent a great change, and from that time on down to the present, the emphasis was laid on acting. Some of the greatest actors of the Japanese stage have been and are Onna Gata. No names in all Japan are better known than the Danjuros--a whole family line of Onna Gata. Today Nakamura Utaemon is the leading Onna Gata of Japan, and his son, Nakamura Fukuake, is one of the most fascinating impersonators of women in Tokyo.

A most interesting code of life for these men has grown out of the profession. These principles have been collected in the form of a book called "Ayame Gusa", being the ideas of the first Onna Gata of Kyoto. These actors are supposed to exhibit the heart of a woman. Even in the green room they should take care not to be seen eating, even as a woman should never be seen in the act of taking food. They should hide the fact that they are married, and if they are asked about their wives they should blush. They should have all the gentleness and mildness of a woman and should strive to develop all the natural feelings of a woman in daily life.

Because of the present array of Onna Gata on the stages of Osaka and Tokyo, there seems to be little danger that the new theatre movement will cause any diminution in the interest of the public in this profession. The two leading theatres of Tokyo are headed by Onna Gata.

The Marionette or Doll-theatre

The Doll-theatre and the Kabuki were the two chief amusements of the people during the long period of Shogun rule in Yedo. Both were originated by women. The Doll-theatre began as a popular entertainment at the very same time that Okuni's dance marked the beginning of the popular theatre, Kabuki, which was later to become the exclusive possession of male players.

Ono-no-Otsu is credited with inaugurating the new form of entertainment, the Doll-theatre or Marionette Theatre. She was a lady-in-waiting in the household of Oda Nobunaga, the famous General. The ballad-drama, performed by doll actors, accompanied by ballad singers with a small orchestra of Samisen players, created a unique chapter in the history of the Japanese theatre. It was called Joruri because the first ballad to be sung to Samisen accompaniment concerned the love affairs of Yoshitsune and the beautiful Princess, Joruri. The love affairs of Princess Joruri seem to have started the writing of a large number of ballad-dramas just about the same time that Okuni appeared in Kyoto. In the literature of this period we find a thousand red and blue covered books in which are written the stories which were acted by the marionettes, with drawings

illustrating the stories.

On an old screen of the Kiecho period, when Okuni was dancing in Kyoto, we have a picture of one of the first Joruri theatres, conducted entirely by women. The Tayu, or minstrel, sat on a platform higher than that on which the dolls performed. The puppets had no hands or legs, and the hands of the women manipulators were not seen. Those who played in the Samisen orchestra were also women, but when the women's theatre or Onna Kabuki was found to be the source of immoral thoughts and actions and was banned, the women of the Doll-theatre came under the same criticism, and men took over the profession.

Minstrel entertainments and the doll performances existed separately until the Samisen was brought in from the Liuchiu Islands, and then they united in the form of the puppet show. By the end of the 16th century, the Joruri was so enjoyed by the people as to threaten to completely overwhelm the Kabuki. Japan's greatest dramatists wrote the plays for the Joruri. For nearly 80 years the doll-acting was so perfect as to completely hold the theatre-goer's attention, and even the stage actors had to acknowledge the puppets as a source of inspiration. They acknowledged that they went to the Doll-theatre to learn and returned to their own acting with new ideas and enthusiasm. Even the costumes of the dolls were studied and taken as models for stage costumes.

But after 1757 the public became more interested in the imitators of the dolls, and the popularity of the Joruri waned

and fell, until, by 1804, the dolls almost went out of existence. Now there is but one theatre in Japan, the Bunraku-za, in Osaka, where this ancient art can be seen. It seems to be a fact absolutely unknown to the average educated Japanese that this very interesting phase of their dramatic art, of which they are so justly proud, was originated and first propagated by women.

The Kabuki Stage in the Modern Era

One of the most striking developments of the theatre in the Meiji period was the reappearance of actresses on the stage. The female actor had not been seen since 1629.

Japanese travellers abroad were impressed with the actresses they saw on the Western stage and asked why women actors were never seen on the stage in Japan. Danjuro, the greatest of all Japanese actors, was one of the first to insist that women be allowed to return to the stage. He acted with a French actress to show the public how sincere he was in his attitude. He even went so far as to introduce his own two daughters on the stage, but it was too early, and there was so much criticism that they withdrew.

It was one of Danjuro's pupils, Ichikawa Kumehachi, at length who was able to accomplish the return. She was a dancing teacher, studied under Danjuro and started her own woman's theatrical company. This company became so popular as to be engaged for entertainment in private homes where nothing could have persuaded the hosts to acknowledge regular actresses. The

few actresses existing then had the lowest reputation and position in society. The women in Ichikawa's company even took men's roles and became famous for their splendid disguises. Ichikawa, herself, played until she was 70, and died a few days after her last performance in 1913. Danjuro said that if she had been a man her skill would have surpassed his. She was sometimes called the "woman Danjuro", but even Ichikawa found her sex such a hindrance that she was not given freedom to fully develop her genius. She died obscure and neglected, and her company disbanded for lack of a woman leader.

Sada Yakko

Sada Yakko, who was the first actress to appear abroad, travelled to London with her husband and danced and acted with him on the stage, but she had only a small measure of success at home. She was a waning star, when, toward the end of the Meiji period, she started a school for actresses, training women for the stage in the new Imperial Theatre. At this time there was a great craze in Japan for Western drama, and all such plays, of course, had female characters. Japanese actors had excelled in Onna Gata taking women's roles, but they were not able to portray the roles of foreign women. Too many men had travelled abroad for them to be able to deceive the public. A call was made for young actresses, and a deluge of stage-struck girls clamored for the places just as in the recent Hollywood star invasion.

Matsui Sumako

The first actress of this period to gain a national reputation was Matsui Sumako. She was the young wife of an innkeeper in a fishing village but was divorced and came to Tokyo to live with her brother. She worked in his cake shop until she found a new husband who was interested in the drama, and together they joined the Tsubouchi Company. Dr. Tsubouchi was a professor at Waseda University who was much interested in the reform of the stage and in training actresses free from any immoral influences. Matsui became the star of his new company. She fell in love with Dr. Tsubouchi's stage manager, a professor in Waseda University. He was forced to divorce his wife and to leave the faculty. He then married Matsui, and they, together, formed a company called the Art Theatre. She toured Japan playing many Western parts, but her greatest success was in Tolstoy's "Resurrection". It seems that much of her success was due to her husband's standing and reputation, for after his death other Kabuki actors refused to play with her, and she received bad treatment often from her audiences. She was finally compelled to retire. Critics say that she attempted too much for a woman of her meagre education and experience and owed much of her success to her intellectual husband and to her own willingness to be as putty in his hands as he directed her.

Nakamura Kasen

A woman very successful in playing male parts was Nakamura Kasen. She began acting when only 13 years of age and was

almost wholly self-made, learning her parts merely through her own observation of Kabuki players as she sat in the audience. She was original in her parts and finally came to own a theatre in Tokyo which was very popular.

Mori Ritsu-ko

Miss Ritsu-ko Mori was the first woman of really good family to take up the career of an actress, and her name now stands at the head of the actresses in Japan. She was educated in the exclusive Atomi School in Tokyo, the daughter of a member of the Imperial Diet. She studied dramatic art for three years and made her first appearance when the new Imperial Theatre was opened. It was a daring thing to do, but she has overcome private and public criticism by her hard work and her dignified unassailable private life. She excels in comedy, though she has been seen in many roles. She has raised the standard of her profession above the old ideas held so many centuries and has been largely responsible for making it possible for respectable women of education and culture to enter the green room without damaging their private reputations. Miss Mori is often called the Maude Adams of Japan.

The Girl's Opera in Takurazuka

Halfway between Kobe and Osaka, the Girl's Opera is proving a very successful venture. Here is a school for the training of 500 girls in Kabuki and light opera. A very difficult program of music, elocution, foreign language, dancing, art and literature must be completed before the girls are chosen to act

in the daily performances at the huge modern theatre which attracts thousands to this lovely little hotspring village at the foot of Mt. Rokko. Male roles, as well as all other parts, are taken by the girls, and many of them are becoming as famous in men's parts as are the Onna Gata of the old stage famous in women's parts. Lately the best of these young opera stars have been taken to Tokyo for a month each year, where the theatre fans make much of the innovation, and tickets are sold out weeks in advance. The whole scheme is financed by the Interurban Streetcar Company, whose president is the best-known patron of the theatre and of the opera in Japan, as well as owner of many theatres and moving-picture houses.

Mr. Robert Porter in his book, "The Full Recognition of Japan", gives the following facts and interesting comments on the stage in Japan. He says:

"The three defects in Japanese acting may be attributed to the size of the theatre. Tricks that appeal to the eye rather than the ear are relied on, such as posturing, grimacing and excessive pantomime; elocution is intolerably shrill and staccato; women are debarred from acting by sheer physical inability to tramp the twelve or twenty miles a day involved by their inconvenient dress and mincing gait. This circumstance has been turned to great account by the men who play women's parts and who, formerly, were expected to spend their lives outside the green room in female costume and society, thus attaining extraordinary perfection. There are, of course, companies in which all the roles are played by women, but since the visit to Europe of Mr. Kawakami and Madame Sada Yakko, it has become more usual for the sexes to appear together on the stage.

The stage owes much to Otojiro Kawakami who broke down the prohibition against men and women acting together and, also, rewrote a number of foreign plays for the Japanese stage, taking the plot and adapting the situations but leaving out those incidents that would offend the public. In 1900-01 he took Sada Yakko to Paris and London showing the West for the first time some secrets of the Japanese drama. The Europeans were delighted with Sada Yakko's dancing in 'The Geisha and the Knight' as well as in Kawakami's jijitsu and mimic hara-kiri."*

It is interesting to read that Mr. Fukuchi, a famous student of Shakespeare, had translated Othello and Hamlet, 25 years ago, though he never dreamed of presenting them, because the freedom of speech and action enjoyed by the Shakespearian heroines might have been morally dangerous to his countrymen. In fact, he regarded Shakespeare as unfitted for the Japan of 20 years ago, when the position of women was less independent than it is today. Audiences were not then emancipated enough to welcome foreign heresies for their own sake.

"Professor Tsubouchi, a leading educationalist at Waseda University and the chief exponent of European ideas concerning the drama and the theatre, has done more to give woman a place in the Imperial Dramatic School than anyone. He and Mr. Nishimo, the director of the new Imperial Theatre inculcated methods of national deportment and elocution in harmony with refined realism."**

Mizutani

A recent article in the Japan Advertiser gives an interview with Mizutani, one of the most famous actresses of the stage

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Porter, Robert, The Full Recognition of Japan, p.542

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Ibid, p.545

today. She was playing in two modern Japanese plays, appearing in native costume in the one and in chic foreign clothes in the other. Her answers to the newspaper man's questions were interesting.

Where were you born?

In Tokyo, and I adore Tokyo audiences.

When, and in what, was your first appearance?

In Monna Vanna, when I was but 9 years.

Later in "Bluebird" and "Hamlet".

You and Sarah Bernhardt are the only women to attempt that part, aren't you?

Yes, and it took a lot of courage, I can tell you, but I loved the part. Yes, I like all kinds of plays, but the modern drama parts suit me best.

Do you dance?

Oh, yes, I do--Kabuki dances. The modern dances such as the tango do not suit me. I dance only when the occasion demands it. I find that the foxtrot, the tango and practically all foreign dancing spoils one for classical dancing.

I understand you were married lately, and that your husband is Morita Kanza of the famous family of actors. How does it seem to be married to an actor, and must you play and dance to please him?

Well, of course, I like to please my husband, but when it comes to acting he is such an artist that he leaves that part of my life to me. We do not allow our careers to interfere with our happiness.

What part of the audience do you consciously play to, the gallery or the bald-headed row?-- I hear many calls of Mizutani or Yaechan as you leave the stage. Do you like such intimacy?

Well, I play to the whole audience, of course. However, I appreciate the criticism of the gallery. It is worth a great deal to me. As for jokes and remarks, they are a part of an actor's life. I especially enjoy playing to the middle class

people. They bring the whole family, children and all, and they know life. If the acting is true to life, they sense it quickly and are not slow to let me know it.

Have you been to America?

Indeed, I have. The Company sent me to Hollywood studios to see how pictures are made and to meet famous stars. It was vastly entertaining and decidedly instructive.

The interviewer added that Mizutani is about 30 years of age but looks nearer 20--one brave enough to permit her career to win over her family wishes for an early marriage of their choice and to marry the man of her own choice, a famous actor and a man interested in her work--a modern Japanese woman, but not too modern. She is business-like and heads her particular group of actors--a guild formed to better conditions under which actresses work and a growing concern which accomplishes things. Time was when a woman on the stage was not considered anybody. In fact, they were forbidden to appear, as they lowered the moral tone of the theatre by their very presence. But now all is changed, and woman has made a place for herself on the Japanese stage. Her art is sacred to her and a thing to be proud of.

Mr. Ingram Bryan in his chapter on "The Actor" in his book, "Japanese All", says:

"Popular actors are in great demand and are very highly paid, receiving more income in a month than a prime minister does in a year. From wealthy patrons they are accorded valuable gratuities called 'flowers' (hana), and since women have been allowed again on the national stage, some of them have attained to fame both at home and abroad and are attracting audiences quite as much as

men do. In Japan, as elsewhere, the green room has been regarded as a realm of mystery and romance and is no less so today with the return of women to the stage."*

Zoe Kincaid says in her admirable book, "The Popular Stage of Japan":

"In order that men might reign supreme in the world of make-believe, the creativeness of the Japanese woman in the direction of the theatre was clearly sacrificed, but in the future their talent may be able to find scope for development in a theatre of their own as an expression of the spirit of women. The tendency of the theatre art in Japan is toward the separation of the sexes, and there is hope that in the future a woman's theatre, free from immoral influences that caused the downfall of the Onna Kabuki, will coexist with Kabuki, the firmly established masculine stage."**

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Bryan, Ingram, Japanese All, p.117

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Kincaid, Zoe, The Popular Stage in Japan, p.63

ATTITUDES OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

In the early history of Japan, Japanese women enjoyed equality with men in a measure perhaps greater than in any other country. Women had a voice in politics, were trained for warriors and often accompanied their husbands into battle, and had a vital part in the conduct of social and business affairs. In the eighth century the throne was successively occupied by very active and capable Empresses. Japanese history in the earlier period is full of records of woman's dominating power. The home was then the center of education for girls. They learned from their mothers and mothers-in-law all the things women needed to know. The few who became scholars learned indirectly from hearing their brothers study aloud.

In the tenth century a great change came over the condition of women in all respects. They lost their mental and moral vigor.

Literature became a fashion among them and they thought of and aimed at nothing but how to appear delicately graceful and languidly gentle. The effete disposition thus bred among one half of the population grew into a cloud that veiled much demoralization and women became such coy and timid creatures that they were too shy to look into the faces of the male members even of their own family.*

At the close of the tenth century a new interest was taken in women's education. This was during the Heian period when

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Count Okuma, Fifty Years of New Japan, p.197

the Fujiwara family was at the height of its greatness. Their strong hold upon the throne and upon political activity came from the fact that their daughters rather than sons were chosen for rulership. Women, either on the throne or at the right hand of the Emperor, gained thus great influence and power. The Fujiwaras vied with each other in educating and training their daughters.

Each princess required a large staff of lady teachers to attend her and on her entry into the Court these followed her thither to become court ladies. As may be imagined the literary and intellectual attainments of these ladies told largely on the popularity and influence of the princess whom they served and, in turn, on the power of the princess's parental family. Thus there arose a demand for women of high qualifications and they were forthcoming. This was more especially the case in the early part of the eleventh century under the reign of the Emperor Ichijo. At that time Fujiwara-no-Michitaka's daughter, Sadako, was a sharer of the throne and his brother, Michinaga's daughter, Akiko, was also in the Court as Princess of the Middle Palace. The Empress and the Princess each had under her a train of women of high accomplishments. Sei Shonagon headed the list of scholars who surrounded Princess Akiko. She it was who achieved lasting fame by writing makura-no-Soshi which is as remarkable for the vivacity and strength of the author's mind as for the elegance and terseness of its style. The Empress's side had its representative in Murasaki Shikibu. She was a virtuous woman of austere type, chaste in heart and pure in conduct. Her Genji Monogatari is a voluminous work of 54 volumes. It is not designed to be instructive. Nevertheless, it is a work of genius possessing the rare merit of being charmingly beautiful in style with interest unfliningly sustained throughout. For these reasons the Genji Monogatari came to be regarded alike by male and female students of national literature, as a model par excellence of style and diction in prose and poetical composition.

With the advent of the twelfth century when the military class ruled, woman's career took another turn. An extreme requirement of female chastity was forced upon them. The result was almost complete segregation of women. After the age of ten, girls in many homes, never left the house. Women were expected to be unceasing in their prayers and in performing the family rites at the Buddhist temples. Many women became nuns. This attitude toward women continued until the sixteenth century. There were two books especially which influenced the status of women during these centuries, "Family Rules" by Shingen Takeda and "One Hundred Articles" by Motochika Chosokabe. A woman's education consisted in hearing these rules from their parents and neighbors and learning to abide by them. Homes were warned against any meeting of the sexes and especially against admitting into the rooms of women any male relatives, including priests as well as merchants.

Tokugawa Era

In the Tokugawa regime we have another change in the attitude toward women. Confucian learning now became the ruling influence and the attitude toward women taught by the Chinese classicists was to the effect that it was very objectionable to allow women to give themselves up to Buddhist rituals and teachings. Women were brought again into the social circle. The Confucian school thus had a very great influence over the education of women.

Some of its admirers went even so far as to attempt, not without success, to found a system of education for women on the ideals exemplified in the characters of the Monogatari. It is this particular school which, retaining some followers till this day, must not be left out of count in studying the history of women's education in Japan. For be it remembered, that, in spite of the fact that women's ideal throughout the rest of the Heian days was to be graceful in appearance, tender in heart, and gentle in movement, and that from Kamakura days onward, when the wave of military ascendancy swept over the country, society entered a new phase, the aristocrats rallying around Kyoto, the seat of the Imperial Court still adhered to a line of education governed by the Monogatari ideals. A perusal of Menoto-no-Fumi, by Nun Abutsu, of Chikubasho by Naganori, will more than bear out the above statement; and this in turn shows that there had arisen and continued to grow a tendency among women of the higher class to look back to Murasaki Shikibu as their ideal of womanhood and to the characters of the Genji Monogatari as specimens of men and women moving in model society.*

Late Heian and Early Kamakura Period

In reaction from the laxity between the sexes in the Heian period early in the eleventh century Bushido came to be adopted for the guidance of women and was called Teijodo.

Teijodo demands that once married a woman must under no circumstance whatever entertain any frivolous thought and that her mind shall in this respect "be rigorous as a winter's frost" with a determination even to sacrifice life in order to preserve honor and constancy. This doctrine is set down in the famous Jikkunsho, the pioneer book of women's instruction in this country. Since then books upholding this line of teaching have never ceased to appear. In Samurai families methods of practical education were always held in the highest esteem, and women were veritable counterparts of Spartan wives and daughters. This school held its own throughout the Tokugawa period as is seen from the circumstance that its ideals are elaborated in all books for the instruction of women.**

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.199

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Ibid, p.201

It was Nakae Toju (1608-1678) who first started the idea that woman's education was a necessity. He was the founder of the Wang-Yang-ming school, called in Japan, Oyomei, a protestant sect of Confucianism. About this time two books by followers of this school were published--Harukaze and Kazanigusa. These books advocated that women train their minds. It was not enough, these books held, to write poetry. They must have such education as would train them to manage their households and to be able to teach their children qualities of efficiency.

Banzan Kunazawa (1616-1697), also of the Oyomei school, wrote two treatises, Joshikun and Joshikun Wakumon. He went much further than anyone had ventured before and taught that women should study under teachers and memorize the Chinese classics so as to become accomplished in the moral teachings of Confucius. He stressed the cultivation of gentleness, obedience, honesty and kindness, quite as much as any former teacher, but added to these precepts the cultivation of the mind as well.

But the man who was to establish a really new school of instruction for women was Ekken Kaibara, 1630-1714. He was more practical in his suggestions. He went so far as to maintain that women's shortcomings were caused by her ignorance or undeveloped intellectuality. He taught that women should receive an advanced education--even studying mathematics as well as household economics. Boys and girls should be taught together, he held, until the age of seven but, after that age, should be separated. From seven years on, girls should study

reading and writing using the kana and supplementing this with the simpler Chinese ideographs. They should memorize much classical poetry and read the primary Chinese classics and the treatises written upon women by scholars. After the age of ten they should not be allowed to go outside of their homes but should study with private teachers counting, calligraphy, sewing, weaving and household economics. They should be warned against wasting time or interest on any vulgar or low class reading or in learning songs. As the finished product of education they must present themselves as nearly perfect as possible in the four cardinal achievements of women--womanly virtues, womanly address, womanly deportment, womanly service. In his Wazoku Dojiku he laid down the rules by the keeping of which a girl might present herself to her husband's family as the perfect wife and mother. Certain of Kaibara's followers collected these various treatises about girls and women and published them in a volume called Onna Daigaku, "Greater Learning for Women". This book has, to the Japanese, fitted every social condition and period since it was written. It has influenced the attitude of and toward women more than any other book. It became the custom for every family of the upper classes to use this book for the daily instructions of the daughters. It is still considered the one book that embodies all the ideals for women and it is used as a basis for all the ethical textbooks used in schools for girls. Its pervading spirit tends to tie women down to a life of reverence and obedience. It gives instructions for the behavior of women in

every detail of life. It names the seven grounds of divorce and denounces remarriage for women.

Token, Kaibara's wife, was noted for her learning in Chinese classics, general literature and penmanship. On Kaibara's frequent long absences Token did much of his writing for him. About this time lived another scholarly woman, En (1660-1725), the daughter of the famous teacher of classics, Kenzan Nonaka. She taught many of her father's advanced pupils and was noted for her broad learning and fine moral character. Tsu Inouye (1660-1730) also mastered the Chinese classics under her father and became a great poetess. Taira-no-Akiko was a noted mathematician and Rei Arakida, a historian of note.

Following Ekken Kaibara there were many authors who published books on woman's education. Tekisai Nakamura and Raisai Fujii and the famous Lord of Shirakawa (1758-1829) are noted for volumes on education for women.

But their books were little more than a rehash of Confucian teachings and could not lay claim to any advanced ideas on the education of women. Lord of Shirakawa wrote Naniwae at the request of his bride and his celebrated Rakuo Kanna Haikki but he did not attempt much more than to popularize Confucian ideals although his books are not lacking in passages and precepts of practical usefulness. In his inner heart he seems to have entertained an idea that woman would be better off without any learning. At all events to him the noblest thing in woman was to be affectionate, gentle in heart, conciliatory and obedient in disposition. He really left nothing behind him worthy of special consideration except that he followed the old beaten tracks of Confucianism. So long as women remained under the yoke of the teaching of this school, there was no chance for them to drink fully of the joys of a freely developed mind.*

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.195

Perhaps in no words could the attitude toward women in this period be better stated than in the counsel to women of Soko Yamada. Although he lived as early as the seventeenth century, his teaching was revived in Bushido.

The wife of the Samurai has a duty of great moment to properly manage household affairs in place of her husband. The vicissitudes of life must not influence her conjugal devotion. Nor shall she change her mind in the presence of questions of life or death. She shall be possessed of the spirit of constancy and fortitude so as to be ever ready to combat against intruders or face death before an enemy. Women must not be educated to be effeminate or languid.*

Shoin Yoshida (1831-1859)

Shoin Yoshida, one of the chief actors in the drama of the Restoration, followed a similar line of teaching in his Jokai, "Women's Guidance", also in Honcho Retsujo Den, "Lives of Japanese Women of the Most Rigorous Principles", and in Honcho Onna Kagami, "Japanese Women's Mirror". The period produced not a few women who were the personification of such teaching. Among these were the wives of Kazutoyo Yamanouchi, Tadaoki Hosokawa, and Shigenari Kimura.

To sum up, the early education of women from the time of the early Heian period was represented by three schools: (1) The advocates of the Genji Monogatari. Gracefulness and gentleness were the ideals for women, and although they were not supposed to be scholars, yet many did become authors and poetesses. Many also learned Chinese classics from listening to the men of the household reciting them or from hearing their brothers

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.195.

during their lesson periods. Buddhism had great influence and many women became nuns. (2) The Confucian school taught that reverence and obedience must be women's chief virtues and constructed codes of great severity concerning the relations of the sexes. Women were freed from Buddhistic slavery but were not allowed to see the world for themselves or to broaden their views. (3) The Teijodo School with its very severe Bushido code, which taught the girl how to develop herself so that she would never fail in the role of the Samurai's wife. She would know how to conduct herself in an emergency and how to keep active in her mind and heart the indomitable spirit of maintaining at any sacrifice the strictest chastity.

The principles and ideals of all of these three schools have existed through all teachings concerning women since the tenth century. Some have dominated the attitudes toward women in one period and others in another period, but at no time have any of them died out or failed to have a following. Even today, in the education of women in any line, it is easy to see the influence of these old ideals. Underneath Western learning and systems is the foundation of the old principles of Kaibara Ekken, Murasaki Shikibu, and Soko Yamada.

Another school of thought, but unnamed, which influenced women, came like a ray of light and then vanished for several centuries. This idea arose when Xavier, the Catholic Missionary came to Japan in 1549 to teach Christianity for the first time. President Naruse of the Nippon Women's University writes in his

essay on the education of women:

The result of the teachings of the Jesuit missionaries was the introduction of a new civilization and this turn of affairs could not but have an effect in awakening women to a sense of their social position. From that time onward there grew up a new tendency among a section of our women to be active in mind and body. A glance over the Seikyoshi, "History of Western Religion", which is regarded as an accurate record of those days will bear out the statement just made, the conduct of the Japanese women who find a place in the book being particularly remarkable in this respect. The new light was soon extinguished by a blow of the political hand but it is recognizable that the undercurrent of thought set in motion by it while it burned, continued to grow as a latent force.*

In the latest book published on Japan, "Japan over Asia", William Henry Chamberlain, the author and a prominent newspaper man, says that practically all the leaders among women in social, suffrage and religious work are Christians and a large percentage are graduates of Mission Schools. The little spark kindled in the sixteenth century has acted as a pilot light for four centuries.

The Restoration Period

With the Restoration came a new day for women's education. In the early years of the nineteenth century the exclusionists were overpowered by the desire of the people for western civilization and learning. It had been seeping in through traders from Portugal and Spain, Holland and Germany, even while the doors were closed. From the latter part of the nineteenth century, Japanese women began to regard it as a moral duty to give

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.204.

their daughters a regular course of education. First the clans established girls' schools. Between 1870 and 1872 at least six clans formed such schools with definite curricula which were mixtures of the ideas held by all the schools of thought. These schools were crude and poorly organized, but they are famous for being pioneers in a field which was to have great influence on new Japan.

The new order of things, brought out by the Restoration, was to emancipate the daughters of aristocratic families from the thralldom of narrow ideas and cramped intellect, and to instil into their minds the light and power of new knowledge, so that they might be regenerated as wives and mothers, broadened in view, made healthy in body and active in spirit.*

On the fourteenth of September, 1871, the Emperor issued his Imperial Rescript encouraging foreign travel. One paragraph of this document shows how attitudes toward women had changed. The fact that Emperor Meiji, himself, honored women by his thought and care, did much to establish them in their new position in society. Emperor Meiji said: "We still lack an established system of education for women in this country and they are generally deficient in the power of judging and understanding things. How children grow up depends upon how their mothers bring them up and this is a matter of supreme importance. It is commendable that those who go abroad should take with them their wives and daughters or their sisters. These would then see for themselves how in the lands they visit women receive their education and they would also learn the way to bring up children."**

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.206

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Ibid

In 1887 a girl's department was opened in the Peer's School for daughters of the aristocratic families and a curriculum of primary and secondary education was planned for them. Five years later by order of the Empress, the Peeresses' School was established and made quite independent of the Boy's School. The entrance qualifications were now broadened and daughters of high-class families as well as peeresses were admitted.

In Japan, as in every country, the privileged children are taken care of first, yet the others soon demand attention. The Terakoya temple schools and the Shingakusha were the institutions that first appeared to meet this need. The Terakoya was a school in the temple and used priests as teachers. Later it ceased to be controlled by Buddhist priests only. Shinto priests, Samurai, doctors, even women were allowed to open Terakoya schools. Both boys and girls, between the ages of seven and fifteen were admitted. The sexes were separated in the school and not allowed to sit together. In the case of girls, writing was the most important subject taught. They were taught to write in kana and were given easy lessons in reading, arithmetic, and sewing. These children were mostly from business families and their education in accounting and arithmetic was quite an innovation. Even the rich girls were not taught such subjects. This knowledge was useful when the girls became housewives or servants managing households.

A school a little higher in grade was the Shijuku. Between the closing of the Tokugawa regime and the early days of Meiji

there were 17,000 such schools. In these higher schools the girls were greatly outnumbered by the boys. However, they were open to girls and attended by a goodly number.

Shingaku means "Heart-Science Society". It was started by Baigwan Ishida (1685-1744) who aspired "to create a new moral force for the guidance and spiritual conversion of business circles, especially the sons and daughters of trades people". These spread all over East and West Japan. They were especially concerned with the education of women. Among the leaders of the movement was a nun, Goin. She was a favorite disciple of Ishida and was especially concerned about the training of young children. Another leader, Tejima, devoted himself to the teaching of rules of etiquette and personal behavior required of women; also the correct relationship between husband and wife. He opened a school in Kyoto in 1782. Tejima's best pupil was Nakazawa Doji. In 1791 he opened a school in Yedo (Tokyo). He was a popular lecturer, being gifted in putting the teachings for women and girls into short interesting stories and parables. He had a very great influence on the community. The part played by the Shingakusha was very great. The two schools at Yedo and Kyoto were centers for this cult and from them radiated about two hundred schools. They certainly had a corrective influence on the morals of women during this period. The work of the Terakoya, Shijuku and Shingakusha was supplemented in well-to-do families with private instructors in Sanisen playing, cooking, spinning, weaving, and dancing. In many families however only

the last three accomplishments named were required.

For fifty years the tendency toward women's education had been growing. Even with these schools and the prefectural girls' schools the education of women received little attention compared with men's educational advantages.

The matter attracted the Emperor's attention and in a rescript, proclaiming the new system of education, His Majesty condemned the old practice of leaving the question of women's education out of state consideration. This admonition became the corner stone, as it were, on which was built the grand structure as we see it today. In 1872 the new system was put in force. Since that date boys and girls must enter school at the age of six. They have four years in the elementary primary course and four years in the higher primary course. Girls who have finished the second year of the higher primary course are allowed to enter Girls' High School. In 1905 out of one hundred school-age girls ninety-three were attending school.

From 1872 the government has established girls' high schools. The first two were in Tokyo and Kyoto. In 1882 a girls' high school was added to the Tokyo Woman's Normal School with the object of giving girls a general education of high grade, having for its principle aim the inculcation of moral and ethical principles and the sending forth of accomplished young women of good character. Up to 1885 there were nine of these schools. In 1899 it became compulsory for every prefecture to have one or more schools of this class. There were also quite a few private girls' schools. In 1905 the total number of government and private girls' schools stood at 100 with 31,574 pupils. There were in comparison 271 schools for boys with 104,551 students. Even at this date there was plenty of room for an amplification of accommodation for woman's education.*

During this period, the latter part of the nineteenth century, there were opened a number of protestant mission schools for girls. President Naruse says that in writing a history of

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.213

female education in the Meiji era these Christian institutions should be credited with having proved themselves powerful agents for disseminating new western knowledge and the English language among the daughters of the land.

In 1874 the Tokyo Women's Normal School was opened as a government institution and the Empress gave to it 5,000 yen, thus showing her interest in woman's education. Since that time all prefectures have opened normal schools to instruct women for the profession of teaching. In 1886 higher normal schools for women were established. Besides graduates of these schools, the graduates of certain mission and private schools received licenses to teach. In 1884 women were permitted to take part in the Doctor's Diploma Examinations. This gave some medical women of note the opportunity to engage actively in promoting medical education among women. The Tokyo Women's Medical School was soon afterward opened and now has hundreds of women studying medicine and nursing. Large numbers of mid-wives and nurses serve communities throughout Japan. With the establishment of the girls' high schools, courses were opened in flower-arrangement, tea-ceremony, sewing, cooking, photography, and art, besides many courses in manual arts and the English language. Girls of well-to-do and middle class families usually finish girls' high school or technical schools. After graduation they take private lessons for a year or two while preparing for marriage. A limited number go into the higher girls' schools.

The first really higher grade institution was the Nippon

women's University in Tokyo which was opened in 1907. This university has two divisions, one a three-year course and the other a post-graduate course also of three years. There is a special department in which industrial arts and commercial education are taught. Many mission schools have added higher departments, of college grade, and there is also a fine Christian university for women in Tokyo. The graduates of these higher departments, especially mission school graduates, have become leaders all over the country in political, social, and religious work. Practically all of the women's social workers in Japan are graduates of Christian college departments.

There have been many different opinions advanced concerning woman's education during the past fifty years. Contrary to a prevalent notion many have held and more now hold that women are endowed with enough natural mental ability to make it worth while to give them higher education. There seems now to be a consensus of opinion that girls should have a high school education, but many hold that to pursue education beyond this period injures feminine virtues. Many fear the "moga", a word coined for the modern girl. They fear that she will follow Western ways and rebel against the old Ekken Code which has ruled women so long. The wave of industrialism has also changed opinion greatly. Economic pressure has convinced struggling families that their daughters must be educated if they are to earn the needed support. In fact, women's education these days is swayed almost entirely by economic conditions. In prosperous times

higher education flourishes. In hard times it declines and families soothe themselves with the idea that too much education for women is dangerous. In such times technical and professional and business education of middle grade quality flourishes, as more and more girls leave home to work in stores, factories, and in all lines of public service. President Naruse says:

Since the beginning of our history it has been the lot of our daughters to feed on and digest imported civilizations, all the time building up characteristics peculiar to themselves. Lately they have been drinking freely at the fount of Western civilization and under the guidance of the new life illuminating their ancestral qualities. Also, number of women coming from other countries of the Asiatic continent and islands in search of education increase yearly. It is as though the day is at hand for our daughters to become the rallying point for their sisters of the whole Orient and as such take an active part on the world's stage. They owe not a little to Western civilization in gaining such a position. But the result is not less due to the tremendous power of advance and development which has always lain dormant in our women.*

In spite of the fact that Japan has done so much for woman's education there is no field where it is so easily seen that girls and women are considered lower in value and of less ability than boys and men than in the field of education.

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Count Okuma, Op. cit., p.215

ATTITUDES OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD SEX AND MARRIAGE

From a Japanese man's point of view sex relationships in the Western world are idealized to an absurd degree, and love between sexes is exaggerated to a point of weakness. The place of the love theme in all Occidental literature and especially in poetry is very difficult for any Japanese student to understand. Romantic love is not considered a justifiable basis for such an important relationship as marriage. Marriage is not a personal affair but a social concern. Before marriage, in Japan, young men and women seldom meet. In school, boys and girls are separated, except in a very few experimental schools, and even in these they are never taught in the same classroom. Their playgrounds are separated, too. From the age of seven the sexes are kept strictly apart. This is carried to such an extent that a boy would be criticized severely for walking on the street with his sister or for going about with his mother. Wives walk behind their husbands, and, in any kind of gathering, men and women sit on opposite sides of the room, even in Christian churches. To the Japanese the mixed audience, dancing and co-education present very dangerous situations, and to the conservative mind they savor of the immoral. Japanese society is purely masculine, and there is no place for a woman of refinement and good morals in public. Of course, modern ideas are changing this attitude, but it still holds in most places.

When a young man becomes of age he does not choose his wife for himself, but his family consults a Nakadachi, a "go-between", whose profession it is to bring parents into contact with suitable mates for their sons and daughters. Every angle of the relationship is of vital importance to both families, and it could not possibly be settled by the young and inexperienced.

After an agreement has been reached by the go-between and the representatives of both families, a "miai" is planned. This is a "meeting" or a "seeing". Very often this is the first time that the prospective bride and groom have had an opportunity to meet. After seeing each other, either or both may object to the arrangement. It is claimed by the Japanese that the family always seriously considers such objections, but the principle that "Obedience is the first law of life" having been so deeply instilled into the young man's and young woman's training, they usually both sit with bowed heads during the "miai" in a spirit of perfect acquiescence. Many a young woman does not even look into the face of the prospective bridegroom. In a modern Japanese home this custom is modified somewhat, and the young people are allowed to have some voice in the choosing of their mates, but the percentage of such homes is very small indeed. This does not mean, however, that young men and women in Japan do not fall in love. The daily newspapers often carry stories of Shinju which is the double suicide of lovers who know that there is no hope that their families would ever allow such a relationship.

In most homes the husband looks upon his wife merely as a housekeeper or even as a servant, and, if she bears children, he greatly respects her as a mother. He finds his companionship and pleasures with women trained to entertain him, women of the tea house, hotel, dance hall or from the prostitute quarters. Very seldom does the husband take his wife to any public affair. The legal wife is respected and treated well from the same standpoint that a fine horse would be cared for. One university student, being entertained in his teacher's home where a group were discussing and comparing attitudes toward women, said, "It pays to treat your wife well just as it pays to treat your saddle horse well. You get better service, and it is a pride to show them."

Usually the marriage is not registered at the City Hall until a year or more after the ceremony. If the marriage has proved a mistake in the eyes of either family, it is dissolved without seeking the aid of the court. The marriage may be very satisfactory to the bride and groom but if unsatisfactory to either house the man must take the children, if any, to his family and send his wife back to her home. The wife was pronounced dead to her family when she married into her husband's, so her family do not want her. She is disgraced, and no one else wants her. This is one of the frequent causes of suicide. This custom is already in disrepute and is criticized freely by educated Japanese. Even yet, however, it is considered quite proper for a man to divorce his wife if she does not bear a child within a reasonable time. In olden times couples were often separated when they seemed to be really

fond of each other, for then they might decide things in favor of their own home and offspring instead of in favor of the whole family. The new family should not become independent of the family group, for they might even forget their ancestors if they were too satisfied with each other.

A custom peculiar to Japan is seen in families where there are daughters and no sons. The oldest girl must marry someone who will be adopted by the family as a son. He is called a yoshi and takes the name of the girl. The system of adoption is widespread in Japan. Not to have a male heir is the worst tragedy that can befall a family, and its only recourse is to adopt the second or third son of some other family and by marriage to their daughter make him their heir. Skilled apprentices are often adopted into families and made the heir. Even when there are sons, who for some reason are not worthy to take the important place as the head of the house, such a course is followed. Rich business families often adopt some especially capable young man and marry him to a daughter. He is made the heir and becomes the father's successor in the business.

Foreigners are always disgusted, at first, with the way that the Japanese man treats his wife. After they live in the country and understand the customs, they generally feel differently. There seems to be no such thing as a chivalrous attitude on the part of a Japanese gentleman. The Oriental man has only contempt for the Occidental husband, and, for the most part, Japanese women

feel the same way. A Japanese lady spent a few years in Seattle. She returned home and was married in the usual way. She had a good deal of leisure time, and, knowing English well, she decided to teach foreigners the Japanese language and earn some money. She became the teacher of the wife of an American who taught in the Government University in Kobe. The American woman had been feeling very critical of Japanese men in their attitude toward women. She asked the teacher if she didn't notice the difference in the way women were treated in America and in Japan and if she didn't feel that the Japanese men were very impolite. The teacher replied, "Oh, no, I was so glad to get back home where I was treated properly. In Seattle, my escort pushed me into the room first, and if we went to a hotel he made me march in ahead of him and follow the waiter to our table. Everyone gazed at me, and I was so unhappy. In Japan, the man would go first and open the way and 'take the gazes'. In America, if I had a package in my hand my male escort would always take it away from me and act as though I were not able to carry even a book. I felt so useless and was glad to get home where I was considered strong and capable and useful." After many talks the American woman found that the point of view mattered very much in such cases. If she were to live in Japan, she must look at things through Japanese women's eyes if she were to understand both sexes and their relationships. After some years this Japanese teacher's husband divorced her because she did not bear him a son. The American woman was interested and amused to hear that both had remarried,

and that after the second marriages the woman bore three sons, but the man still had a childless home.

According to Western standards the Japanese wife truly is treated very inconsiderately. She is supposed to have no ideas or desires of her own, but she must always be in perfect subjection to her "lord and master". She must not eat until he has eaten and has been offered all the best parts of the food. In fact, in many families, the wife has a different menu of less expensive food than the husband eats. She must not sleep until her husband has come home and is helped to bed, and she must not close her eyes until he is audibly asleep. She must never complain, no matter how tired or ill or unhappy she may be. However, in many good homes, the wife is clever enough to win her place and wield a very great influence on her husband, children and relatives. The hardest thing in a Japanese woman's life is that she is completely under the domination of the mother-in-law so long as she lives. The irony of this is that each woman, in her turn, becomes the same kind of a mother-in-law to her son's wife.

The word for wife in Japanese is okusan, "honorable lady of the back room". She is supposed to have no interest or desire aside from a perfect management of her home and the wise upbringing of her children. Every task is performed with a double purpose, the welfare of the family and the happiness of her husband. He does not ask for intellectual companionship. He can get that more satisfactorily from his men friends.

These conditions hold true in the very large majority of homes, but there is fast growing up a new type of family where the husband and wife are both educated, and where the man does treat his wife as a near equal. Nothing has done as much to bring about such a new attitude as Christianity. Since girls have had higher education, many of them studying in Mission schools under Christian teachers, the attitude of the young wife, too, has changed radically. She not only asks to be treated differently than her mother was treated, but she is in a position to demand it. She is no longer an economic parasite but is able to support herself in the modern industrial world, if necessary. In the Christian home the attitudes of the husband and wife and their relationship to the members of the family on both sides are so different as to be most noticeable when visiting in the home. The health and happiness of the mother and girls become important as well as the welfare of the male members of the house. Science, too, has done much to level the sexes, and every educated man today must recognize the value of the health and happiness of the wife and daughters. But, no matter how modern or Christian a man may be, Shintoism and Confucianism still have a mighty influence, their principles having been inherited from centuries back. Ancestor worship dies hard, and the woman has not satisfied the family ancestors and so become worthy of family consideration until she bears children. Her wishes are not consulted in this, even in times of illness or poverty.

A very interesting example of a modern home in Tokyo is that of Mr. and Mrs. Noma. Mr. Noma is called the "Magazine King", because he publishes from seventy to eighty per cent of all Japanese magazines. When a young man, he was a primary school teacher in the Liu Chiu Islands. The principal of the school, having occasion to go to Tokyo, agreed to hunt a wife for him. In Kyushu he persuaded a primary school woman teacher to go back to the island with him and marry Mr. Noma. The match proved to be a very happy one, as the home shows. Mr. Noma's Japanese biographer says, "What struck me as lovely about his home life is that there seems to be a perfect understanding and cooperation between the master and his wife. Where he is, Mrs. Noma can always be found. The one is always within talking distance of the other. She is his sweetheart, companion and nurse rolled into one. She is more, for she writes his letters and advises him in business. He makes her privy to all his affairs in business and personal correspondence lest, as he says, he may die any time and leave her in the dark. Mrs. Noma is an elegant woman of what you might call the classical type. She is still in the comfortable forties. She occasionally came in and joined in the conversation. Now and then her husband would turn to her for her opinion when speaking on a subject he thought she knew more about than he did." There are many such homes in Japan to which Japanese point with pride when the man's attitude toward the wife is questioned.

A great fear has arisen in many families in Japan which hinders the men from according women and girls the freedom and courtesies which they would really like to give them. The fear is that such a position accorded women might mean a decrease in the birth rate. With such attention she might become like her western sisters, selfish and self-seeking. Although a million babies a year are born in this little country which is unable to feed its population, still the old dread of a family without an heir and of a possible lack of soldiers to fight for their Emperor rules in the long run. Woman's status has been greatly bettered, but she is still appreciated because of her functions as wife and mother. The principal of the largest high school in Kobe some years ago told the writer that the only purpose of higher education for girls was that they might become better wives, and that he expected every teacher in that school to bear this point in mind every moment while teaching them.

The whole attitude of Japanese society toward the wife is summed up in Kaibara Ekken's Onna Dai Gaku, "Women's Great Learning". Here are written the rules regulating all of the conditions and acts of a girl's life, both daily and ceremonial, the moral duties founded on Confucian ethics, and the home duties in the care of guests and rules for looking after their own clothing and bodily niceties. Every Japanese family in the Meiji period had a library called the Onna Yushoku Mibai Bunko, "A Library of Works on the Duties of Women". These books were:

Onna Dai Gaku - Women's Great Learning (moral duties)

Onna Sho Gaku - Women's Small Learning

Onna Niwa no Oshuji - Household Instruction

Onna Imagawa - Moral Lessons in Paragraphs

Onna Yobunsho - Lady's Letter Writer

Nijiu-shi Ko - Twenty-four Children
(Stories of model children in China)

These volumes are not popular today as they once were, and the modern girl may not hear of them at all, but every household in Japan still theoretically bases its ideals and actions on these principles, now known as "grandmother's wisdom". Every attitude in the family circle can still be traced to these volumes. Let those who question the truth of this statement read these sentences in Baroness Ishimoto's biography: "I have watched my mother conduct herself all through her life in a literal following of what is written in these great books of morals. A social system and a new social consciousness in harmony with it never seem to arrive together."

The fanatically rigid discipline of the Onna Dai Gaku is seen in the following quotations:

The honorable teacher says;

'Woman has no other place but her husband's house to live in, and so, in Great China, woman's marriage is called "returning home". Even if her husband's house is poor, she should have no regret. Poverty is the misfortune Heaven bestows on her, and she should, on no account whatever, leave her husband's house. This is the woman's way, taught by the divine masters of old'

If a woman dishonors her way and is divorced, she carries a life-long shame with her. There are seven reasons for which a woman may rightly be divorced. These are called 'The Seven Rules for Putting Away a Woman'.

Rule One;

Put away a woman who does not obey her parents-in-law.

Rule Two;

Put away a woman who does not bear a child; for woman is needed to beget the heir. But if she has the right spirit, good manners, and is not jealous, she may stay and adopt a son within the family. If a concubine of her husband has a child, the childless wife need not be dismissed.

Rule Three;

Put away a woman if she is lax in morals.

Rule Four;

Put away a woman if she is jealous.

Rule Five;

Put away a woman if she is leprous or has other undesirable diseases.

Rule Six;

Put away a woman if she is talkative and impertinent, for a talkative woman causes discord among the relatives and breaks the harmony of the family.

Rule Seven;

Put away a woman if she steals things.

When a woman is divorced after once marrying, she is disgraced all her life, even if she is married again to a rich husband, for it is against the way of womanA woman has no master but her husband whom she should serve with respect and humility, never with a light attitude and disrespect. In a word, the way of woman is obedience. To her husband she should be submissive and harmonious, serving him with gentle and humble expression of the face and speech. Never should she be impatient and wilful, proud and impertinent. This is her first duty.

She should absolutely follow the husband's teachings and wait for his directions in everything of which she is not sure. If a husband puts a question to her, she should answer in a correct manner. An incomplete answer is a piece of incivility not to be excused. If a husband gets angry and acts accordingly, she should fear and be ruled by him; never contradict him. The husband is Heaven to the wife. Disobeying Heaven incurs righteous punishment

The common evil natures of women are: (a)-to be wilful, (b)-to be offended easily and to be reproached, (c)-to be inclined to abuse others, (d)-to be jealous, (e)-to be shallow-witted. Seven or eight out of every ten women have all these five sins. This is what makes women inferior to men. She should know herself and conquer her weaknesses. Above all, shallowness of mind is her worst fault and is the cause of all the other evils. Woman is the negative principle, like night and darkness. Therefore, woman is ignorant and does not foresee anything; does not know what is despicable to the eye of others; what is a hindrance to her husband and her children. Her ignorance is even such that she reproves and bears ill will toward those who have no cause to be reproached and cannot tell her who are her true enemies. In bringing up her children, she merely follows instinct and not reason; so she cannot educate them properly. Utterly devoid of wisdom, she should humbly follow her husband in everything

In the ancient teachings it is said that when a girl baby is born she should be laid for three days under the house floor. This is because man symbolizes Heaven and woman, Earth. Therefore, woman should follow man with humility. Even when she has done something plausible she should never be proud of it. If she has her faults pointed out by others, she should acknowledge them at once and make amends with humbleness of heart, in order never again to be put in the same disgrace. Even if she is scorned, she should not be offended but be patient and prudent. If she follows these teachings, there will be harmony between man and wife, peace in the family, and a long conjugal honor to the woman

Woman should always be careful to keep herself blameless. She should get up early and retire late, never lie down during the day, keep busy, not neglecting spinning, weaving and sewing. She should not drink much of such things as tea and sake wine; should never see and hear such lewd drama as that at the Kabuki theater, popular songs and Joruri music. Also, she should refrain from going to shrines, temples and other crowded places before she is forty years old.*

It would be impossible to describe the Japanese attitudes toward marriage in any adequate way without making at least three classifications of families:

- I. Those who hold rigidly to the old customs and rely on such advice as the Onna Dai Gaku furnishes. The largest number of homes, by far, falls into this class.
- II. Those who, through inability to cope with the times, financially and ethically, let their children arrange their own marriages. These young couples usually make an attempt, so far as their means will allow, to live in foreign style. This would be the smallest group.
- III. Those who are trying to combine the best in both the Japanese and Western ideas and customs. This is the growing class and usually some touch with Christianity can be traced in such groups.

A family illustrating this third group is one well-known to the foreign community in Kobe. Mr. and Mrs. S. have a lovely home in a suburb between Kobe and Osaka called Rokko. The daughter of the writer has spent her Saturdays for several years in this home studying flower arrangement and tea ceremony with the daughter of the family. The house is built in foreign style, but it has many Japanese features. Taking off the shoes at the

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Baroness Ishimoto, Translation of Onna Dai Gaku, Facing Two Ways, p.279

door and putting on house slippers and many other such customs observing the niceties of Japanese etiquette still are followed by both foreign and Japanese guests. Sometimes foreign food is served and sometimes Japanese, as suits the convenience of the hostess. A foreign style dining-room table is used for either occasion. If Japanese food is served, the old family lacquer and porcelain which has been handed down for generations is used. If foreign food is served, the service is as perfect as would be found in a wealthy refined home in America. In either case, the meal will have been cooked by, or at least carefully superintended by, the wife and daughter. The father is a member of the staff of a well-known engineering firm and speaks English well, as do the wife and daughter. The daughter has studied piano and violin, foreign and Japanese cooking and sewing and dancing, foreign languages, flower arrangement and tea ceremony. Lately, the daughter was married in a Japanese Catholic Church with her family and her young friends attending. In true Japanese style the man's family would invite the guests, and the bride's young friends would probably not be invited. This family used a go-between to formalize the arrangement, but the young couple had met many times and were friends and had expressed their willingness and desire for the match before the go-between arranged the formal conference with the two families. The young woman has been a bit spoiled, perhaps, by her loving parents, according to Japanese standards. They sent her to a Catholic girl's school

for six years and to America for a summer's trip. They have been most lenient and companionable with her, yet, at the same time, they have never failed to let her know that she will be expected to become the same unselfish, uncomplaining, ever-serving woman that she has seen exemplified in her own mother. No matter how many foreign customs she may choose to follow in her own home, she will be expected to follow to the letter the old accepted idea of her relationship to her mother-in-law and to her husband's relatives. She may be allowed to plan her life according to what she observed while in California, but her husband's family will always value her for what she means to their son as a wife.

There are hundreds of homes like the one just described which could well be taken as a model in any country. The Occident has many things to learn from the refined home of Japan. But, where there are hundreds of this kind of homes, there are millions which still belong to the old feudalistic regime and that would delight the soul of Kaibara Ekken, could he return to see them. In no part of the life of Japan are such deep changes taking place as in the position of women in the home and in the attitudes toward marriage and sex. And yet, in 1935 a young matron in Tokyo wrote, "Marriage is a predetermined fate for a Japanese girl. There are parents who betroth their children before they are born. Some babies are engaged as soon as they take breath in this world. Within this social scheme some girls grow beautifully; others peep out like white plum blossoms buried

under the snow of winter, nobly but painfully accepting their lot without hope of joy."*

Such conflicting ideas cannot forever sway the minds and actions of people. Would that the girls and women might realize that the final pattern will depend entirely on what they ask for themselves and what they demand for their children. Here, as in so many departments of life, if only the Oriental and Occidental ways of thinking and acting could be "shaken up together" and the best of both combined, attitudes toward marriage and customs would be improved for all. The cold, hard, statistical fact that the same proportion of marriages "go on the rocks" in the Occident as in the Orient might well make either group pause before criticizing too harshly the ways of the other.

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Baroness Ishimoto, *Op. cit.*, p.101

ATTITUDES OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD PROSTITUTION

What do Japanese women think about prostitution? Few have dared to write on this delicate question, but Baroness Ishimoto spares no words nor anyone's feelings in her attack on the institution. She says in her recent book, "Facing Two Ways":

There are in Japan about 52,000 women who come under the pitiful brand of licensed prostitutes (1931). Before we decide upon any practical or effective measure to do away with this shameful institution, we have to take account of the fact that it has been a deep-rooted historical phase of our social growth. Prostitution seems a universal social phenomena. In Japan it existed from ancient times in the forms of religious rites practiced by sibyls and priestesses. All through our ancient history and with the formation of the Samurai class, about the twelfth century, the prostitution of women was given a semi-religious warrant. There was a large class of slaves in those days, but prostitutes were not so ranked.

With the usurpation of power by the Samurai, the sexual morality of the warrior class was gradually refined, especially on the woman's side. A high sense of chastity was maintained by the wife, and beside her restraint prostitution seemed more immoral. However, it never declined. On the contrary, it grew with the increase in the precariousness of the warrior lives rendered unavoidable in a feudal society, and with the brutality of feudal wars marked by the selling of women captives. It developed rapidly throughout the country, spreading whenever a town rose under the power of a local daimyo; until, at last, in 1538, the bankrupt Ashigaka Shogunate achieved the idea of taxing immorality, thereby giving it special recognition and destroying its secret machinations. Licensed prostitution flourished in the open from this time on, accompanied by a prosperous traffic in women. Daughters of unfortunate Samurai, of indebted

tradesmen and of hungry peasants were bought and sold in a thousand ingenious ways.

It was the first of the Tokugawa shoguns who segregated prostitutes, enclosing the brothels in licensed quarters. This was the origin of our Yoshiwara and other so-called Pleasure Enclosures, (Yukaku). Miserable women were gathered here by cold-blooded brokers and brothel proprietors, and shut up, in most cases, for life; in the case of the physically exploited, the run of life was short. With the return of peace and the rise of the bourgeoisie in the last stages of the Tokugawa feudal regime, the Pleasure Enclosures became the center of social life for men, offering refuge from the rigidity of family system. Some produced grand courtesans, refined and proud, who raised the standard of men's cultural tastes and so introduced the professional entertainer--the geisha of today. Shocking but tempting must have been this peculiar institution of Japan to the western visitors of early Meiji times, for many a Madame Butterfly and Okichi with many of the more practical Madame Chrysanthemums became familiar figures to gallant gentlemen. However, the Meiji government was thoroughly ashamed of this barbaric institution, and, within five years of its establishment, it prohibited traffic in girls and declared the abolition of licensed prostitution. This sudden reform only distributed the evil through the entire society, and in less than a year the government reinstated the licensing system with the proviso that the women were to be regarded as employees, and not as human chattels to be bought and sold. A physical examination was strictly enforced on the licensed prostitutes.

It would be far from just to condemn as immoral the Orient as a whole on account of its licensed prostitution. More than ninety per cent of these girl victims sink into this shameful life not because they want to, but because they must help their poverty-stricken families by this means. It is natural that Count Keyserling should observe that the atmosphere of the Japanese brothels is not unclean. The relative refinement of these places springs from the girls' sense of filial

duty. Natural depravity and vanity have not thrust them into this inferno.

However, no matter what have been the reasons and background for the existence and growth of these professions, both the low-class prostitutes and the geisha are the enemies of domesticity, and, as such, enemies of civilization in Japan.

Owing to the recession of feudalistic sentiments among men and women amid the change from complicated formality to free and open conduct, the demand for geisha and licensed prostitution is decreasing, though its rate may be slow. Unhappily, cafe waitresses, professional entertainers whose service is within restaurants, girls in the public halls who dance by the ticket system are new professionals replacing the old.

Our licensed prostitution is a grave problem for us, and it has become even an international issue. There have been many attempts to remove the blot from our society, but so far none have succeeded. One thing that impressed the public with the cruelty of this institution was the Yoshiwara tragedy at the time of the earthquake. The women of the quarters, unaccustomed to liberty of movement, lost time in running from the pursuing conflagration, and many of them were burnt to death. This horrible fact aroused righteous indignation among the Japanese, and especially among the women of Tokyo who, having learned to organize while taking part in the relief work, now resolved that there should be no permanent handicap of this kind for their sex and determined to end licensed prostitution for all time. At present, Japanese law sanctions the right of licensed prostitutes and geisha to free themselves from forced restraint, if their debts can be paid in some other way; so the Salvation Army and several women's civic organizations are doing their best to protect these "reformed women".

But more is involved than ethics. Even if they succeed in freeing geisha and prostitutes from their cruel bonds, so long as there remains the need to exchange one's personal charms for rice their profession, whether licensed or not, will remain. It may even expand if the depression throws more economic wreckage into the streets.*

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Baroness Ishimoto, *Facing Two Ways*, p.291

The Reverend H.W. Erskine, a careful student of social conditions in Japan, outlines the history of the Social Evil Problem as follows:

Personal purity has had three distinct stages in the history of Japan. The first was that when neither men nor women were pure. Descriptions of these days of about 700 A.D. can be found in the Kojiki, Nihongi and Manyoshu. The second was that of feudal days when women were commanded to keep themselves pure and were forced into prostitution if found guilty or suspected of guilt. During these days, ideas of personal purity did not touch men, except as he of the higher classes sought to keep above the common prostitute for his own concubine. The third stage is the attitude of the present time beginning with the social standards introduced from the West and the teaching of monogamy. The present Emperor (1917) at his wedding agreed to dispense with an Imperial harem allowed him by law.

From another angle, prostitution in Japan may be divided into three kinds. In the early days there existed religious prostitution when women gave themselves to the upper classes, thinking thereby to be serving the country and the gods, and many gave themselves to priests and religious workers as mistresses. The second period is known as the entertainment period when daughters, sisters and maid servants were given to guests as long as they stayed in the house. It is against the third or commercialized vice that the women of Japan are working today and slowly making progress.

From the business point of view prostitution has the same standing as any other business, is liable to taxation and is free to advertise. It is considered an honorable trade. A brothel-keeper can be a member of a local assembly or a representative in Parliament. It is a common thing for a mayor of a village to be a brothel-keeper. On the back of maps in any city can be found the location of the prostitute quarters. The Governor of Osaka offered as his excuse for granting license for new quarters, when the old ones burned and hundreds of thousands of citizens petitioned against rebuilding, that he

was obliged to rescue the twenty-six business men who were burnt out in 1913.*

While living in Japan the writer, herself, has seen in Kyoto, posted where everyone might read, the itinerary of a famous Japanese General who was passing through the city. A schedule was given showing which homes of courtesans he would visit and where he would be feasted and entertained by famous geisha.

Women are often brothel owners. The writer was visited by a young man who had belonged to her Bible Study Class for several years. He explained that he must resign from the class because of his shame. His mother was the owner of several brothels in Osaka. She refused to sell them, though he had begged her many times to do so. Rather than be supported longer by such business, he had decided to leave college.

A Short History of Prostitution

**In "The 1917 Christian Movement in Japan" Mr. Erskine wrote a short history of prostitution in Japan, culling his facts from the Japanese encyclopedia, Colonel Yamamuro's books, the book written about the Osaka Tobita campaign and the Kakusai magazine. He divides the history of the system into five periods.

Earliest Stage--740-1500 A.D.

These days are described in the Manyoshu or "Book of Ancient Songs", and the poems tell of the ancient prostitutes. During this period many kinds of entertainers were exploited, and for a time they seemed to have kept above suspicion but later fell into

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Erskine, Rev.H.W., Christian Movement in Japan, 1917, Chapter III
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Ibid

prostitution. In this public record public women are called Ukareme, Yokojofu, Shirabyoshi, Kakaeonna, Kugutsu and Yuna. In 1194 there was an effort at regulation when Sato Nakanajazaemon attempted to establish a licensed quarter. In 1191 a retreat was found in the soldiers' barracks.

1500-1590 A.D.

In the Ashikaga Period was recorded the first police regulations with the first tax on girls and keepers, and for the first time the words niuri, niuke and teranibutsu (selling temple registrations) appear. Also, the word zagen (legalized procurers) is found.

1590-1751 A.D.

During these years many quarters were opened. The first licensed quarter was established at Yanagi machi. Kyoto, Osaka, Nara, Fushimi and Tsuruga soon followed. Women judged guilty of secret prostitution were forced to live in the quarters. In 1613, in Tokyo, a man applied for permission to open a brothel, and three years later there is a record that permission was given to Shoji of Odawara to open the world famous Yoshiwara. Colonel Yamamuro, the noted Salvation Army leader, ironically says, "They (the Yoshiwara) are as famous as the Pyramids of Egypt to tourists."

For a short time in this early period a trial at self-government was made; the keepers organized as a village and agreed to furnish the city with girls for the various shrine festivals and,

also, agreed to spy out the secret prostitutes. They did their duty only too well and forced many innocent girls as well as guilty ones to fill the quarters. During 1655, there is recorded a seizure of bathhouse girls and the fact stated that they were forced to serve in the cheapest quarters. In 1657, the Yoshiwara burned, and a new quarter was built with new laws and regulations. In 1661 was established the first Odoriko (Dancing Girls' Society), and in the early days it enjoyed a good reputation, though soon it gained a very bad name. In 1681, a group of these girls were taken from Kyoto to Tokyo, and in a few months the government was aroused by shocking tales, and three hundred were forced into public prostitution. Another similar society called the Kikoro-bashi was formed. From 1690 reports can be read of the soka in Osaka, the Tsujigimi in Kyoto and the Yotaka in Tokyo. These groups registered under different names, but the work was the same. The government was aroused again because of the large number of suicides and double suicides. They denied funerals to those who took their own lives and ordered all those who attempted to die with prostitutes to become beggars. Again, in 1750, in Kyoto, it is recorded that 1300 girls were seized and sent to the Shinabara Quarters.

1751-1868 A.D.

In 1764 there arose a new class of city and licensed quarter entertainers who are known today as geisha. They were, for a time, called haori and enjoyed a good name, but they, too, soon

fell into prostitution. In 1781 there was a movement toward reform of the geisha, and many good families sent their daughters to learn the arts of singing and dancing in the geisha schools. But soon, again, the girls wanted to make more money, and the mercenary ones brought disrepute on all. In 1789 the government had its periodical purity campaign and ordered a study of public and private prostitutes. A few years later there is a record of the opening of four new places in Kyoto at Gion, Nijo, Shichijo and Kitano, all of which are temple areas.

In 1800, for the first time, the Shakufu (waitresses) are mentioned in the reports and are spoken of in connection with the rice exchange and Sonezaki shrine festivals. Each shrine quarter had its sacred festivals and religion at this time seemed to join hands with prostitution.

In 1825 geisha and public prostitutes seemed to be regarded on the same level, although the geisha were, perhaps, a bit lower, because there were no laws regulating their actions. In 1831 there was a law passed banishing geisha altogether, but a few years later it was declared that it was permissible for a girl to support her aged parents or sick elder brother in the capacity of a geisha if she did not become a prostitute. Each tea-house was allowed but one woman to wait on the guests so that there would be no time for idling or temptation. In 1848 the records state that geisha were very numerous and that prostitution was forced on them.

1869-1900 A.D.

New Japan now comes into contact with western civilization. The first recorded western influence was the German Medical Examination of Prostitutes. The local prefectures adopted different measures; one demanding that all prostitutes be examined, and the geisha as well, once a month and the Shakufu three times a month.

About this time a strange incident affected the system a great deal. A boat load of Coolies from China were being taken to Peru as slaves. One Coolie jumped out and swam ashore in the dark and notified the British Consul who immediately notified the Japanese authorities. The Coolies were rescued and sent back to China by the Japanese officials. Peru sued Japan for the loss, and the Czar of Russia was asked to arbitrate. He decided in favor of Japan but said to the Japanese government that before she "rescued other nations' slaves she should free her own". This, of course, referred to geisha and prostitutes. The Japanese pride was touched, and in 1873 they made a new law freeing all slaves. The prostitutes were still kept in quarters but were freed from old debts, and all the geisha were released. This law was really farcical, for it lasted only a week; its real value being nullified by the fact that the law also stated that any women might renew their trade upon making a new application. At this time a geisha might begin her life as such at the age of twelve years, the shakufu at sixteen and the public prostitute at full eighteen years.

There are many kinds of prostitutes. The best known are the Kosho or public prostitutes. They are kept very closely in the quarters, not being allowed to leave except with the permission of the police.

The Shakufu or waitresses are girls serving at tea-houses or around parks and resorts. They are not registered as prostitutes but are recognized as such and are made to take the medical examinations imposed on all prostitutes. Many good girls are deceived and led into the prostitute life through this channel.

The geisha or entertainers are not promiscuous prostitutes but usually are secret offenders. Each has at least one admirer who keeps her in luxuries. If she has no supporter of this kind she finds herself dropped from the profession. Geisha are taken for training under advanced wages and must obey the master. Faithfulness to the master and loyalty to parents are the incentives that enable these girls to endure the life. There are five classes of geisha:

- 1 - Jimae, the independent girl.
- 2 - Wake, the half-dividing girl.
- 3 - Shichi-san, the seven-three girl who gets three-tenths of the proceeds.
- 4 - Marukakai or nenkikakai, the girl completely employed or hired for a term of years who does not get any of the profits and only a small per cent of the tips. These are the most numerous.
- 5 - Hangyoku - learner on half-pay.

In 1914 the statistics for the city of Osaka alone showed the following figures:

Public registered prostitutes	6,348
Geisha	3,558
Waitresses (Shakufu)	420
High class girls	200
Low class girls	300
Concubines	3,000
Bathhouse girls	100
	<u>13,626</u>

The same report states that one fourth of the children born in Osaka in 1915 were illegitimate.

Not only are such large numbers of women in Japan sold into this nefarious trade, but, according to the statistics given by Colonel Yamamuro in his book on the social evil, there were, in 1915, 22,362 Japanese girls living lives of shame in other lands. These figures have been increased many times over in recent years. He urges the Japanese government to join other nations which bring back their daughters who are found in prostitution.

All through the years many attempts have been made at anti-prostitution. Some provinces kept free because of the high moral standards of the feudal lord, as did Count Okuma's province of Saga. In Nagoya, a missionary named Murphy made a successful campaign that freed many women in that province. The Meiji laws of 1901 were an outgrowth of his work.

It was about this same time that a case came before the Supreme Court concerning the right of parents to force adopted children to become geisha or prostitutes. Colonel Yamamuro writes of many cases of this sort. After a very long campaign, a law was passed forbidding the forcing into service of any child not a blood relation.

Gumma Prefecture had for many years a very strong Christian representative in Parliament. He was, also, President of the Lower House. He led a campaign against vice, and the prefecture abolished all public prostitution. They, however, allowed a certain number of Shakufu as a temporary substitute. Geisha were allowed only as entertainers.

Several times the quarters in Osaka have burned, and each time those interested have worked untiringly to prevent the rebuilding of the brothels. They have failed in their efforts, but at each rebuilding the houses are pushed farther away from the center of the city, and the number of inmates considerably reduced. Out of these campaigns came the founding of the Anti-Prostitution League of Japan.

The question of assisting girls to gain their freedom under the law of 1873 has been agitated many times. The police say that many girls have been released and bought by would-be husbands and then later deserted. This has discouraged the police from trying to help the girls escape, although they are sincere in wanting to assist them in any way that they can. Colonel Yamamuro and his wife have rescued many girls from the quarters, but Salvation Army officers always risk their lives when they enter the quarters to help any girl because of danger of attack from toughs of the district.*

The editor of the largest daily newspaper in Japan wrote in 1917, "Public prostitution must go; it is a relic of barbarism and is not consistent with the civilization of the twentieth century." During this period many Christian leaders have spent their lives working against these evils. The Honorable S. Shimada (chairman

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Erskine, H.W., Op. cit., p.306

of the Lower House), Colonel Yamamuro, Mr. Matsutomi (a famous citizen of Tokyo), Madame Yajima, Miss Hayashi of Osaka, Mrs. Kubashiro of Tokyo and Mrs. Nobujo of Kobe and many others have lectured, written hundreds of pamphlets, engaged in rescue work and made every attempt possible to reach the hearts and minds of the members of Parliament. Rescue homes have been opened in Osaka, Tokyo, Yokohama, Hiroshima, Hokkaido and other centers.

The cost of prostitution is recorded in appalling figures. In the Yoshiwara in 1916, alone, it amounted to 2,120,673 yen. For the whole Empire a tax was collected to the amount of 15,961,071 yen. This does not include the liquor bill in the licensed quarters of 9,310,638 yen nor the amount spent on geisha which reached 5,661,875 yen. Thus the government received taxes on the vast sum of 31,033,584 yen. In one year it is safe to say that 40,000,000 yen was spent on prostitution by guests numbering 16,212,669. This does not include the huge sum spent in clandestine prostitution. In spite of the many laws passed in various periods against slavery, these girls are held as practical slaves, owing large sums of money to their keepers for clothes and fines and hospital bills.

1926-1930 A.D.

*In 1927, Mrs. Kubashiro (the first Japanese woman to study at the Pacific School of Religion), perhaps the foremost woman worker against the social evil, wrote an account of the year's work of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. She says: "The

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Kubashiro, Mrs. O., Resume of Chapter XIV, Christian Movement in Japan, 1927.

campaign against licensed vice is at least forty years old. Eleven years ago a special educational campaign was started in the W.C.T.U. and public opinion was challenged by distributing and collecting little ten sen bags as a fund for the abolition of licensed vice. Over 400,000 yen was collected in ten years. The government has a budget of 60,000 yen to finance their movement to control vice, but the owners of the brothel houses in 1926 numbered over 12,000, so that they were able to undo all that was done for the cause."

Mrs. Kubashiro and the women working with her have a long vision, and they know that it is an uphill job that will take much time and all the money they can possibly raise. They say that it isn't the 50,000 prostitute women and girls in question, merely.

Now is the time that the Christian standard of family life is challenging the whole nation. It is a nation-wide, deep-rooted, fundamental, moral, uphill movement. In the Meiji fire, fifty years ago, Japan abolished the licensed vice by law, but it was only in the letter of the law, because the people were not ready for it. Fifty years have now passed. Christianity with its strong moral standard of purity has taught a life of purity with a single standard for men and women. Now the public senses what an absurdity it is to hold to the double standard of morality. The Bill before the House of the 53rd Congress called for the abolition of licensed vice. It had its supporters in all parties. In a big mass meeting of active workers over three hundred attended, and there were present Buddhists and Christians, ministers and priests, social workers and leaders of feminist organizations, educators and business men, politicians and officials. In more than ten prefectures where the reform bill was published, the treatment of girls and the attitude of the police noticeably changed. In Nagano Ken, in

the years 1924-1927, an average of seven houses a year closed, and in Shiga Prefecture the number entering prostitution decreased five to one. In Miyazaki Prefecture the leading brothel keepers are saying that the business must soon be abandoned. The foundation of it is shaking throughout the country. During these years Mrs. Kawasaki compiled facts and wrote two books on licensed vice in Japan, and copies of these were sent to and accepted by the Imperial Family.*

In June, 1925, the League of Nations sent their proposals to the governments of the world asking their signatures to a bill to prohibit traffic in women and children and to increase the age of consent to twenty-one years. In Japan a council was hurriedly summoned, and they decided to sign, but with two qualifications; the age was to be kept at eighteen years, and the proposals were to be limited to the mainland, only, and not to the colonies. In the year 1926, according to the statistics of the Home Department, there were:

Licensed quarters	533
Licensed houses	11,690
Licensed prostitutes	52,375
Visitors	22,376,643

1930-1936 A.D.

For the progress of this fight from 1930-36 we have the report of the Reverend E.C. Henniger whose time and service have been dedicated to the campaign against vice in Japan by the United Church of Canada. He has published some very interesting facts concerning prostitution in the Japan Christian Year Book during these years. The following paragraph is a resume of his report in 1930:

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Kubashiro, Mrs. O., Op. cit., Chapter XIV

The abolition movement has made marked progress. In 1931, twenty-five prefectures out of forty-four had branches of the Abolition League. Campaigns were put on in twelve prefectures. Abolition bills were introduced in five assemblies and passed in three. In Nagano Prefecture, after six years' fight, the brothel-keepers were defeated, and in Saitama the last house was closed and the last inmate set free. Saitama took its place by Gumma as the second prefecture to rid itself entirely of prostitute quarters. The Abolition Law was again introduced in the Imperial Diet. The twenty-five Christian members stood solidly behind all the reform movements introduced. The latest societies to forward memorials to the Home Office in favor of abolition were the Medical Association of Central and North Japan and the Federation of Ethical Culture Societies. Besides this campaign work over a hundred girls had been rescued, though the girls had to fight for their liberty. In some cases of escaping girls, the court sided with the police who returned the girls to the brothels. Baron Sakatani, Dr. Nitobe, Mr. Kagawa, President Hayashi of Keio University and President Nakajima of Tokyo University consented to be counsellors of the Tokyo Abolition Society.

*In the 1936 Japan Christian Year Book Mr. Henniger reports for the five years since 1930. The following facts are a resume of that report. Mr. Henniger was greatly disappointed that complete abolition had not come after such promising activities in 1930. In May, 1934, Mr. S. Miyano, head of the Police Affairs

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Henniger, Edward, Resume of Chapter XIII, Japan Christian Year Book, 1936.

Bureau of the Home Department, said, "The abolition of licensed prostitution is the fixed policy of the Home Department. However, the control of public morals after abolition is causing some thought to the officials, and much study is now being given to that matter. A draft proposal has lately been prepared, and we intend to put it into operation in the not far distant future." In April, 1934, at a meeting of the League of Nations Commission on the Traffic in Women and Children, the Japanese representative reported progress in abolition, pointing out that three prefectures had already abolished the system and that the movement was going steadily forward. On the strength of this he asked the Commission to include Japan in the list of countries having no licensed prostitution. This request was made publicly in the International Body and was a source of great encouragement to the Abolition League workers in Japan.

Why hasn't abolition been accomplished, then, after such statements from such influential groups? Mr. Henniger gives four reasons for this:

- 1 - The Cabinet resigned in July after these pronouncements in May. The frequent changes in government in Japan upset many plans and stop many reforms. The men who were prepared to take the step of abolishing the system were scattered through many prefectures.
- 2 - The officials investigating the case from the standpoint of public health were not ready to report.
- 3 - The taxes on prostitution quarters, which formerly went into the Prefectural Treasury, would be given as restaurant tax to the Central Government. This made a complicated question between local and government treasuries.

- 4 - The brothel-keepers became alarmed and started a new fight through their representatives in the Diet.

But more real progress was made in the prefectures, and the workers came to feel that the solution of the problem probably lies in cleaning up one prefecture at a time. In twenty-six prefectures attempts were made to present an abolition bill to the local assembly, and in fourteen of these prefectures the attempt was successful. The idea of the government is to change the prostitute quarters into restaurants, bars and low grade hotels which is still a very bad system, but the "inmates will at least be freer to cease their evil life than they were under the old system where they were practically slaves sold to the keepers by their parents or guardians. But this four hundred year old system is at long last pried loose and is toppling". The reasons for the disintegration of the quarters are various. No doubt the rising tide of public opinion against the whole system is a very great influence. Probably economic reasons bear with still greater weight upon the keepers. They are feeling the competition of the all too numerous cafes which have sprung up in every city and town. The depression, too, has taken from the pockets of town and country dwellers the margin which used to be spent in licensed quarters. In Tokyo, however, which is largely industrialized, the depression is not felt so much as in the country places. In Tokyo during the first six months in 1935, 2,903,346 men visited the Yoshiwara, an average of 16,000 per night spending on the average

¥ 2.30 each; the total amounted to 6,698,728 yen.

The latest available statistics for all Japan are for 1933:

509 licensed segregated quarters (decrease
of 25 in two years)
10,281 houses (518 decrease)
49,302 inmates (2,762 decrease)
24,922,604 visitors (increase of 2,527,734, in-
crease due probably to lower prices)

These figures are accurate, as they are kept for taxation purposes. Every man who enters the prostitute quarters must register his name, age, address and occupation, just as in a hotel. It is known that, since the above count, the number of inmates has increased due to the depression, especially in the northern part of Japan, which caused many parents to sell their daughters into a life of shame. During the period 1933-36 the crops were bad, and, as happens always in famine time, the selling of the girls increased. The largest newspaper wrote up the situation under the heading "The Daughter's Hell". Other papers and magazines deplored the fact that the feudal custom of selling daughters had projected itself even into this twentieth century Japan. The Home Department could not overlook such a terrible condition and sent orders to the offending prefectures that traffic in girls must stop and gave 100,000 yen to be loaned to families to keep them from starvation, so that they would not need to sell their daughters. Some 1,340 girls were bought back by money raised by Christian organizations during this period.

It is interesting to know what happens to the girls in prefectures where abolition is accomplished. When abolition came

in Akita Prefecture, 110 girls were badly in debt to their keepers. Some of the girls, through the effort of the police, got substantial cuts, but many got no cut at all, and the keepers got the authority to force these girls to work out their debts as bar-maids. Ninety-four of the 110 remained in this status--seven found employment as servants--nine returned home. The police of Akita say that, even in the face of this poor solution, abolition has had only good effects. The prefecture has opened ten clinics for treatment of venereal diseases. One officer said of the campaign, "The cancer has been cut, and we are on the way to health."

In April, 1934, there was formed a society called Baisho Boshi Kyo Kwai, "The Society for the Prevention of the Traffic in Women". It is a cooperative society composed of both officials and citizens. Seven high officials in the Cabinet at that time joined. There were, also, former Cabinet Ministers and Prefectural Governors and a host of religious and social workers. This body has been making a sincere study of every question connected with the problem of ridding Japan of this traffic.

In March, 1935, the National Purity League was formed. The old Abolition Society joined forces with it. This group worked for abolition and, also, for sex education and hygiene. One advance step which this group has taken is to make a study of the needs which will face the country after abolition comes.

The Japanese are at present very sensitive about foreign criticism of their system of prostitution. They feel that other countries are quite as guilty as they along this line and that

their open acknowledgment in public licensed quarters is really much more honest than the hidden secret red-light districts in other countries. Many think, however, that international criticism will hasten the abolition of prostitute quarters more quickly than any other force. Lately a film was made in France based on Maurice Dekobra's book, "Yoshiwara". It is called "Kohana". In the Japan (Daily) Advertiser of December 3, 1937, the attitude of public officials can be seen in this paragraph:

Because an overwhelming majority of the Home Ministry's film censors feel that the French film, Kohana, still contains many undesirable parts, a complete ban on the picture is predicted. On receipt of news last winter that the story was to be filmed, the Japanese government protested through the Japanese Embassy in Paris, with the result that the author agreed to make necessary changes. The original script was thought to show contempt for Japan, disregarding true Japanese manners and customs. The picture, when released in Europe and America, caused a sensation. The censors still find many scenes "outrageous". Scenes of gay life in general "are enough to arouse the ire of serious-minded theatre audiences, as the picture is too expository".

What could be the attitude of the men in any nation which would countenance and support such a system? What could be the attitude of men who would sell their daughters for food? It is a psychology hard to understand. Mr. Okakura's poetical statements concerning the attitude toward women in Japan in his book, "The Awakening of Japan", sounds rather ludicrous after such figures and facts as we have quoted above. He would probably say that there are 40,000,000 women in Japan, and only 50,000 of them

are prostitutes, and only 100,000 if private prostitutes were added to the list, and that means only one woman in every four hundred. However, other nations who point a finger of scorn at Japan had better look for the beam in their own eye. It seems to be the selling and buying of human flesh that shocks the western world. Slavery of any kind puts a nation in the uncivilized class and keeps them still in the ethical status of the Middle Ages. Nowhere in all Japanese life do the old teachings of Confucius and Buddha show up so flagrantly concerning the lack of value put on life--the lack of an appreciation of personality, of the worth of a human soul, of personal freedom and of the right to health and happiness, as in the attitude of the Japanese people toward prostitution.

ATTITUDES OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

The contribution which Japanese women have made to the economic life of the country is practically ignored by Japanese writers. If a foreigner in Japan asks about the place of women in the industrial life of the nation, appreciation is expressed as a matter of pride and, perhaps, a mild, undetailed bit of credit is given for what they have done. The Mitsubishi Economic Research Bureau's yearly volume on Japanese Trade and Industry for 1934, which is one of the finest works of its kind in the world, mentions female workers in only two tables of statistics, and even there the figures are not clear. In one paragraph notice is taken of the fact that women's wages are much lower than men's and are gradually decreasing. In the six hundred and fifty pages of this volume not ten whole lines are given to woman's part in Japan's industrial advancement. It is impossible, from these lines, to find out the number of women workers in Japan or any salient facts about women's work that would be needed by a research student on this subject. It is surprising how many volumes are written by both Japanese and foreign authors on the economic and social life of Japan which either fail to mention women's part at all or, at the best, discuss it in a few paragraphs.

Dr. Shuichi Harada in his doctor's thesis written at Columbia University on "Labor Conditions in Japan" gives five and a half pages out of two hundred and ninety to "Women in Industry".

Dr. Sidney Gulick, who was a teacher at Doshisha University in Kyoto for many years, felt the unfairness of this situation and, in 1915, wrote his little book, "Working Women in Japan". He gives a total of 515,271 women working in factories. By 1925 this had increased to 955,827 and to 1,250,000 in 1927. The figures for 1927 are the latest available, but general statements written since point to the fact that the number of female workers has greatly increased during the past ten years. In the so-called new industries such as rubber tires, toys and shoes, electric bulbs, explosives, bicycles, watches and clocks, the number has impressively increased, while in chemicals, machinery and parts, the number of men operators has actually decreased.

The Young Women's Christian Association prepared reports showing the female population in Japan in 1927. They were compiled from government reports and interviews. They give the total female population as about 28,000,000, and of these, 12,820,000 are workers. The division among occupations was as follows:

Agriculture workers	6,500,000
Factories	1,250,000
Shops, transportation, telephone	1,200,000
Domestic employment (including 30,000 nursemaids)	1,000,000
Government and professional work	350,000

In the "Fact Finder's Report" which was made under the Foreign Missions Inquiry we find this significant paragraph:

The initial and final impression of Japanese women concerning the present situation as it effects women in Japan is that they are participating as widely and as freely in the business of earning a livelihood as women perhaps in any other country

today. In the busses, in department stores, in offices, in aeroplane service and announcing over the radio, in amusement parks, at gas-filling stations, in beauty parlors for women and barber shops for men, in ticket booths at the cinema and ushering in theatres, on the stage and on the screen, in modern factories and small handcraft shops, in homes, in domestic service, as taxi drivers, in public cafes and in the fields side by side with men doing a woman's work and carrying a man's burden--everywhere women and girls in Japan are in evidence, playing an important economic role in the business of life. In their economic life the Japanese women have stepped out of the eastern frame and belong more to the West than to the East. There seem to be no barriers in women's employment save that the higher positions in various lines are held by men. Women carry on the less important detailed jobs which require patience and conscientious care.*

In the Japanese mind, as a rule, there is no thought of separating male and female laborers in statistics. In this, they would claim there is a distinct advantage to the woman. They would say that such treatment puts women on a plane more nearly equal with men than would be true in the West. Whatever the theory, the facts remain that neither Japanese nor western writers have given women workers in Japan fair credit for their hard, patient labor through which Japan has become a world power.

The figures are obtainable for the numbers of women in the textile trade, and they are very large. Over eighty-five per cent of the workers in this field are women. Still greater numbers are found in the tiny workshops and factories which are not large enough to come under Factory Acts. In the March, 1927, "Pacific Affairs" in an article, "Population and Conquest", by Freda Utley,

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Laymen's Missions Inquiry, Volume III, p.149

is this statement: "Production still depends on human muscles and the dexterity of human fingers in the majority of enterprises. Here in the tiny shops and in domestic industry, women and children work unlimited hours for four or five cents a day. The Factory Acts do not apply to places employing less than ten persons, and twelve to fourteen hours of labor is common." Shuichi Harada makes this significant statement: "Women are socially educated to consider it a disgrace to take any action against the established order, and, instead of fighting against their fate, they remain at their work even while their hearts are breaking. Most of the women workers in Japan are unmarried women. They are recruited from the peasant class and are accustomed to a low standard of living and are conservative by nature. The average percentage of wage sent home from the factories for their families is 70.87%, and the remainder is saved for wedding expenses."*

These quotations give us a picture of the submissive Japanese working woman. Why is she so acquiescent? There are several reasons, understandable only when one knows the history and psychology of the Orient and of the Japanese in particular. The most important factors in this acquiescence are seen in the following social facts and customs. The family system is the most important thing in Japanese social life. The whole nation is a family. The Emperor is the national father, and every worker is his child. The national consciousness is so ingrained even in the heart of the smallest girl worker that she feels her small self actually working

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Harada, Shuichi, Labor Conditions in Japan, p.119

with her Emperor to make Japan the greatest nation on earth.

Upon visiting the Kanegafuchi Spinning Mill in Osaka, one is impressed with the happy, healthy appearance of the girl operators. They receive about thirty cents a day, out of which they pay four or five cents for food, and yet they are smilingly performing their duties, are healthy in appearance and attractively dressed and are seemingly happier than the average privileged high-school girl in America. This contentment is due largely to the ethical background described above. They feel themselves a part of the whole national scheme and have a consuming purpose in their work. But this contentment is also due to the fact that the girl's living conditions, though poor according to western standards, are infinitely better than she would be likely to have in her own home in the country where she would have worked up until the time she entered the factory in the rice fields, wading in filthy water above her ankles. Also, she knows that she will be working here only a few years and will then return to her home to be married. Factory work for her is a step toward her real life, rather than a hopeless grind with no future, as it usually is to the factory worker in the West. She is contented with her wages because her earnings do not change her standard of living. There is little competition between the girls so far as dress is concerned. All dress in uniform, and each girl has the same small stipend for toilet accessories. She is regimented like her brothers who go to the Army. She is just a cog in a great wheel and has never been

trained or educated to think for herself. In fact, she has probably been made uncomfortable each time she has been tempted to think or do anything original. The family system, the school system, religion and all social customs have combined to kill all sense of individuality or personality. Therefore, when a girl enters the worker's ranks, she is able to lose herself in the ranks and not even question any conditions that she is forced to meet. This is equally true of the wife, the farm worker, the prostitute; all are regimented, and the system is so complete that if one girl steps out of line in thought or action it is so noticeable that she is shamed beyond endurance. To repeat Dr. Harada's sentence: "They are socially educated to consider it a disgrace to take any action against the established order." Miss Helen Mears describes the status of the Japanese woman thus:

Woman's place is not only in the home; it is anywhere her father or husband chooses to put her. The Japanese woman has no legal rights; it is hardly necessary to say she does not have a vote. She does not usually inherit or own property, and in the few cases where she does, the husband is entitled to control it. If we are speaking about the great masses of the people--the masses from whom the happy and enthusiastic workers spring, the economic margin is the decisive element in her education for submission. There is nothing for the girl to do but obey her father, but the obedience is made practically automatic by her education, the example of her mother, and the absence of the possibility of doing anything else. If her father decides to send her to a mill on a three-year contract, or sell her to a brothel, it never occurs to her to question the decision, and if she does question it, there is nothing she can do. It is practically impossible for her to become economically independent. When she does

get a job, her wages go to her family, and in many cases they are sent directly to the parents by the employer, while she is given a small allowance. Even if she received all her earnings, they are seldom enough to live on, and the pressure of her training and education, her lack of confidence, her inability to stand on her own feet, make living alone, away from her family, a practical impossibility. More than this, she is still dependent on the family system and the go-between to find her a husband, and even the modern moga cannot face the social pressure against spinsterdom.

All of which fits neatly into the fact that the Japanese chief export advantage is their supply of contented workers. When the managers of the large textile mills point with pride to their pleasant dormitories, their swimming pools, their classrooms, and explain that the girls are better off than they would be at home, they are telling the literal truth. No matter how you look at it, the Japanese girl is not in the world to have a good time. She has no idea of "rights". The presence of these girls in industry partly explains the hard-sledding of Japanese labor organizations.*

On every hand one hears the statement, "Japan is going through a period of crisis." Just as truly might it be said that Japanese women are going through a period of crisis. Japan is being influenced on every side by western psychology and philosophy. Women are reading and travelling and are being mentally and spiritually developed by the very work which binds them. When men by the thousands go off to war, and many of them fail to come back, women naturally take places which are important and step into positions that demand not only mechanical ability, but brains and personality as well.

The feminist movement has made great gains the past ten years, but the women interested in it are all of the privileged classes.

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Survey Graphic, January, 1937, p.38

They are fighting for their rights of equality with men in social principles, family affairs, property ownership and the ballot. Not until the educated, privileged woman gains the right to have a voice in family and municipal affairs can she turn her attention to her working sisters and demand for them recognition as important and indispensable factors in Japan's economic life and international standing. The privileged class of women in Japan know too little of "how the other half lives" to be interested in industrial problems. Occasionally a woman has an unusual experience such as Baroness Ishimoto had when she happened to live among the miners for a few years after her marriage. She says in her chapter, "Are Miners Human Beings?":

Often the miners had to compete for pay with groups of chained prisoners from the Miike Prison. Other wage competitors were the women and children of their own families who were given various tasks because they were so much cheaper. Women who worked in the darkness had a pale complexion like the skin of a silkworm; they spoke and acted shamelessly, the last sign of feminine dignity sloughing off. Often pregnant women, working until the last moment, gave birth to children in the dark pit. I often wondered whether the Japanese capitalists were true in their consciences in saying that the beautiful family system in Japan made men, women and children work harmoniously and pleasantly at their tasks, when they claim Japanese exemption for women, on such grounds, in the International Labor Regulations drawn up at the Labor Conference in Geneva. Westerners often say that Japan is a paradise for children. I wish this were true, but my impression of the children in mining camps is so vivid that I can never forget the horror of dirty little creatures who haunted the garbage box at my door. My heart ached when I saw babies coughing badly and left without medical attention until they died.

"Why must women work outside the home like men?"

"Why must the mother breed and nurse while she works for wages?"

As I watched the lives of these laborers and their women and children, these questions rose to my mind, but I, myself, did not realize then that they were the seeds that were to grow and revolutionize my own life.*

When women of the privileged classes see sights such as Baroness Ishimoto saw, then, we may expect a campaign of education to sweep Japan which will bring an individuality to every girl and woman of the working ranks as well as to those of the privileged classes.

Japan has three occupations which have made her financially able to take the rapid course toward world power which she has enjoyed the past twenty-five years. They are agriculture, sericulture and factory work. In each of these, women play a very important part.

The statistics of the Home Department show that among the 66,000,000 people of Japan proper, almost one half are in agriculture. As independent workers, men surpass women by over one million, and as dependent or hired persons, women surpass men by over two million. These statistics tell exactly what part women are taking in the agricultural life of the people, besides just housekeeping and looking after the children.**

In farm labor, women and girls work side by side with men and boys and often have detailed to them the most unpleasant of the tasks. For instance, the rice is sown broadcast in a small plot, and when it has grown several inches high, each plant is pulled up and replanted by hand in rows in the regular field. This back-breaking task, which must be done standing in the water,

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Baroness Ishimoto, Op. cit., p.161

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Kawai, Michi, Japanese Women Speak, p.117

filthy with night soil fertilizer, is practically all done by women. They also pull all the sprouting weeds during the spring growing season and, with their hands, stir up the mud and keep the soil from hardening around the tender rice shoots. One old gardener of Dr. Gulick's said that since the women take the brunt of the stooping work, theirs is the lion's share of the weariness. He adds that during the rice planting season the women are so important that those days are called "women's daimyo days". While they plant and transplant, harvest and even grind the rice flour by a hand machine, in some parts of the country they must cook and clean, weave and sew and bear more than their share of the million babies that are born each year.

Even in this dirty fatiguing work the girls laugh at their work and seem to enjoy themselves, complaining little, if any, and never refusing to do their part. Girls who are so fortunate as to go later to one of the higher schools often beg to go back home for the planting season so as to share in the work and in the joys of the season.

Tea-picking is another form of farm-labor that falls almost entirely to women, and one of the most colorful scenes of farm life in Japan is the sight of the bright kinono amongst the green tea bushes, the ever present Japanese towel draped on their heads to soften the sun's rays and keep the insects out of the hair. This is, perhaps, the most pleasant task of the country woman. The picking season becomes a social time when the workers can chat with their neighbors and enjoy each other's company in the clean work.

The chief wealth-earning domestic industry carried on by farmers' wives and daughters is the rearing of silkworms and the reeling, spinning and weaving of the silk. Women contribute at least 90% of this labor. This profession alone has made women the most dominant factor in Japan's industrial life. In the 1936 Mitsubishi "Trade and Industry Annual" is this paragraph:

The sericulture industry is characterized by the small size of the units engaged in production, consisting as they do of single households. In spite of the marked improvement in the methods of production, the industry still remains in the stage of semi-feudalism, retaining its earlier antiquated form. As a matter of fact, sericulture is practiced, in most cases, by small farmers as a sideline without any cooperation. The quantity of cocoons produced per household in 1933 showed a 24% increase over that for 1922.

In all the long account of this great wealth-earning occupation the word "woman" or "girl" is never once mentioned, yet it is entirely by them that these voracious worms are fed. Minute attention has to be given to each tray of worms which eat and sleep on a schedule as important as an infant's. During the silk-worm season everything else must give way. The house is filled with trays of squirming, grunting, ravenous worms and huge baskets of mulberry leaves. These leaves are fed to the worms every few hours. They must be perfectly fresh and must not be damp or dirty. If the schedule is not perfectly kept, the worms get sick and refuse to spin the cocoons. After eating they sleep, and the temperature must be just right, and no sharp noise must be allowed to disturb them. There are two or three hatchings of the worms

a year. This heavy work cannot be neglected, even at night, and during this time takes the whole attention of the girls and women. The workers take great pride in their profession. They come to love the worms. A baby with a cute little face is called "skaiko" (little silkworm). Even the Empress and each of her Court Ladies has a tray of worms which she personally cares for. In 1929, 2,217,000 households were engaged in raising silkworms, and in 1935 there were 1,900,000, a decrease because of the popularity of rayon.

Some households merely raise the worms, selling the cocoons to factories, in which case the awful strain and work are over in a few weeks. But in most households the reeling of the silk off the cocoons follows the feeding period. This work, also, is done entirely by the women and girls. The silk has to be reeled off the cocoon as soon as possible after it is formed, because the grub will eat its way out and destroy the silk spun for the nest. Again the women work under great pressure, and often they do not sleep for days and nights at a time. The cocoons are plunged into boiling water to loosen the thread. The worker's hands are par-boiled as she deftly catches the threads. In 1934, 52.2% of Japan's exports were silk textiles. From this fact may be gathered the importance of women's work in sericulture and spinning.

A few years ago, before the large factories were built, weaving was done in the home, but, of later years, machinery has taken the place of the hand-loom, and hundreds of thousands

of girls go off to the factory to work for three to five years before marriage. The time before spent in hand-weaving by the older women and by the girls, who are too young to leave home, is now spent in making small manufactured products. There were a million and a half more commercial workers in 1930 than in 1920. This increase is accounted for by what is known as "household and small workshop industries". Hundreds of thousands of middle-men, agents and jobbers, go to the farm houses and give out raw materials and later collect and pay for the finished piece-work. Japan has fostered such small labor-wasting enterprises because, in her mad industrial rush, she has not had the capital to put into well-equipped factories. Also, she has been able to do this because of the uncomplaining, hard-working wife who is willing to work all her spare moments for the pittance that will help to tide over the lean years. But these household industrial conditions which have vanished from the family life of all modern nations cannot last forever in Japan. The people are too keen to overlook, and too proud to disregard, such criticism as was published in the March 1937 "Pacific Affairs" Magazine written by Frieda Utley, the author of "Japan's Feet of Clay".

The owners of such household enterprises are usually little more than the agents of big mercantile industries and bankers who supply and finance the purchases of raw materials, assemble or distribute or export their products, and charge them usurious rates. They have no hope of accumulating capital for expansion or of obtaining it from an investing public because such an investing middle-class hardly exists. It is obvious that Japan is over populated because industrial development is impeded and because middle-men and monopolists

drain away the funds which might modernize agriculture and industry and so provide both a larger international market and more employment.

Such conditions could not exist were there an adequate value placed on women and her work and a proper regard for her welfare, health and happiness such as are demanded by modern civilization. But not until women, themselves, know this and make their own demands will these methods and systems of household sweat-shop work be changed. The huge sums spent on armament these days are only increasing the tax burdens and lowering the standards of living, so that the relief to burdened households is going backwards rather than forwards.

A recent new departure is that of making small machinery on the farm. This is something like Henry Ford's decentralization of industry idea. For example, in one country factory 500 girls are gathered from the surrounding farms to make piston rings during the so-called leisure season after the harvest is over. Small machinery is also distributed through the country and families unite to make watches, typewriters, bicycles, phonograph and automobile parts as well as gas and electric meters. Thousands of homes keep the women employed till late hours at night to supplement the little cash that the farmer is able to earn. Through reports of the International Labor Office it is seen that 60 per cent of the industrial workers in Japan work in groups not over five in number. No labor laws, local or national, can touch them. Unless women's part in industry is recognized more fully and she is at least mentioned in yearly reports, she may someday

surprise the world and, especially her own country, with a sit-down strike that will affect Japan's position in the industrial world.

The third wealth-earning occupation in Japan is factory work. Here women and girls play the greatest part. Farnand Maurette of France visited Japan in 1934 for the International Labor Office. He visited 22 important factories of various kinds. In the porcelain factory he found that two-fifths of the workers were women. In a match factory there were 196 males and 354 female workers. In these match factories Mr. Maurette says that the most striking features were the high degree of mechanism, the ingenious machinery and the rapidity of the hand work. We must remember that 354 of these workers out of the total of 550 were women. No woman could work years under these conditions, with the degree of skill required, and not be developed in many ways and certainly a few would be so well trained as to become real leaders when the opportunity presents itself. Mr. Maurette found that 77 percent of the workers in the electric light bulb factory were women as well as 29 percent of those in the watch and clock factory, 47 percent of those in the bicycle factory and 53 percent in the breweries. Women do 44 percent of the work in the explosive plant and 45 percent in the celluloid industry.

But it is in the textile industry that women have taken the largest and most important part. In 1934 the textile industry accounted for 53 percent of Japan's exports, and 83 percent of the workers in this branch of Japan's industrial life were women.

Many different factors played their part in the great increase in this line but certainly the most valuable asset was Japan's willing, intelligent, uncomplaining, half-paid women workers.

Dr. Asa Matsuoka has written a very illuminating paper on "Labor Conditions of Women and Children in Japan". When a very young woman, Miss Matsuoka happened to go to a weaving factory in Kyoto. She saw the deplorable conditions there and was greatly distressed. At the time this happened she had a servant in her home who had been employed from early childhood in a silk reeling plant. The girl was totally illiterate and affected in every way by the hard conditions under which she had worked. Miss Matsuoka decided to go abroad to study conditions among working women in other countries. She did social work in America for a few years and studied at Columbia University. In 1929 she returned to Japan to gather further statistics and data on the subject. She studied at the Imperial University in Tokyo and conferred with the specialists in all the labor departments of the government. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington D.C. published her report in November, 1931. She confines her facts and figures to the women and children working in the textile industry. She first calls attention to the fact that one interested in this subject must remember that there are a few peculiar characteristics of Japanese factory conditions that are not found in other countries, such as the following:

- (1) In Japan, factory legislation and regulations were first promoted by the government itself and not by private agencies or

by the workers themselves. Also, these regulations apply only to factories employing more than ten persons and so the native manufacturing industries have been, for the most part, unregulated.

(2) The dormitory system, which completely cares for the worker from physical, social, educational and religious standpoints, is quite different from anything in the Occident. Before factory legislations were enforced a system of long term contracts, amounting almost to slavery, worked great hardships among the girls. Long hours, insufficient food and unsanitary living conditions ruined many a girl's life. The girls were at the mercy of the system because recruiters went through the country practically buying the girls from their families for cash. They made wonderful promises to the parents telling them of the luxurious safe life their daughters would lead under their personal care and attention. But, sad to say, when hundreds of these girls returned home they had been ravaged by disease, weakened by tuberculosis and childbirth and were undernourished and unfit for marriage. Thereupon there arose a compelling sentiment for protective legislation. In 1911, the first factory law was passed; but it was not put into effect until 1916. In any legislation passed in Japan the promoter must count on a great lapse of time between the passing of the law and its being put into practise because the political cabinet changes so often and that means usually a great change in personnel. A whole new cabinet sometimes comes into power and the promotion work must often be done all over again. For instance, this first factory law was submitted to

various authorities more than 150 times before it was really put into effect. In the next factory act of 1925, the revised legislation marked a great step forward. Children under fourteen years of age were prohibited from industrial employment. Children between 12 and 14, who had completed the primary course, were allowed to work. The working day was cut to eleven hours. The employment of pregnant women for six weeks before childbirth was prohibited. Compensation for sickness and accidents were provided. Local authorities were given the right to have a voice in the regulations governing working conditions in factories employing 50 persons or more.

All laws concerning child labor were greatly improved in 1923. Fifty-three percent of the factory workers in Japan are under 16 years of age. Of the 989,390 workers under sixteen, 958,248 are girls and 31,142 are boys. More than 80 percent of these girl workers are in the textile trade. Many of the factory improvements proposed have had, as their main purpose, the protection of these young girls and, as that affects so many of the workers, the improvements have each time met with a mighty opposition from the capitalists. In 1929 night work for women and children was abolished. There has been an intense and dramatic struggle for better conditions on the part of a few who were interested in the protection and welfare of girls and women in industry; but Japan is far behind other world powers in this direction.

The international factor has played a large part in the

acceptance of proposals sent out from the League of Nations and other international bodies. Imported industries were started in Japan to profit by the association with western nations on equal terms. When evils arose in the industrial field Japan looked to the Occident for remedies. The amended Factory Act of 1923 and the establishment of the Bureau of Social Affairs and the Department of Home Affairs in Tokyo came as a direct result of the first International Labor Conference in Washington.

Dr. Matsuoka points out the fact that, while much improvement has been seen in large concerns, many new regulations are needed to bring Japan's labor system into conformity with international standards. Working hours must be cut to the eight hour standard and a weekly rest day enforced. Child labor must be abolished. Many other improvements are needed, but the greatest change must come in the attitude of the state itself toward the workers. Heretofore factory legislation was conceived of as necessary for the protection of the interests of the state and not for the interests of the individual worker. That is the crux of the whole matter. The employed woman is not only a mere cog in a large wheel but she is an unnoticed and uncared for cog.

Is she truly brave and noble in her acquiescence or is she simply paralyzed by the centuries of Oriental treatment? The test has not yet come but it will. Miss Helen Mears says:

Sooner or later these girls will be brought into the sweep of the social changes that are the inevitable accompaniment of economic change. The Japanese have been subjected to incredible stresses for a long period. How rapidly the Japanese woman

makes the transition from Medievalism to Americanism and what becomes of her in the process may well measure the future of Japan and perhaps of the world.*

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Survey Graphic, January, 1937, p.38

ATTITUDES OF THE JAPANESE TOWARD WOMEN IN POLITICS

There are two very different groups in the feminist movement in Japan. The proletarian feminists are those who are interested in social conditions and are inclined to be rebellious and socialistic. They are brave enough to attack the status quo. They are the few in industry who stem the tide and refuse to be slaves to a system without a protest. Their struggle is for class equality. The bourgeois feminists are those who belong to the privileged classes. They have studied and travelled and have observed the differences between their status and that of women in foreign lands. They ask for the same rights as men enjoy. Just as with women in the West they are too dependent themselves on the capitalistic system to rebel against it. They furtively accept it knowing that it is not fair and just but they are determined that they will have the rewards that come from it as do the men of their class. They want the vote and make long plans for the future when they fully expect to gain a voice in national and local government affairs. Neither group will use the methods that western women have used because they know that such active public methods would repel Japanese women and keep them from joining the crusade. They plan to study and "dig under" in true Oriental fashion, finally winning their cause by their tenacious, honest, uncompromising demands.

The first difficulty that the feminist meets in Japan is the fact that no Japanese woman has the right to join a political

party or organization of any kind. It is only since 1922 that women were even allowed to attend a political meeting or hear a political lecture. Furthermore women are usually opposed by their own families when they wish to work for some cause that involves any public service. Many are forbidden to interest themselves in anything outside their own homes.

It was because of home objections that Miss Fusaye Ichikawa, Miss Natsu Kawasaki, Mrs. Ito Niizuma, and Mrs. Shigen Kaneko joined Baroness Ishimoto in establishing the Research Institute in 1925. They issued the following prospectus:

Women have lived in the past in a condition quite different from men. Naturally there has been a world peculiar to us marked by phenomena exclusively concerning women. This divergence was true not only of the past, but it is true today, and even if the time comes when our social circumstances are entirely identical with those of men, problems will remain in some form, caused by the differences of sex.

However, there has never occurred in the past a single worthy study of those phenomena of the women's world. Such studies as have been published have all represented men's views. Again, there is a great deal of breath spent in the daily papers on the transition in circumstances that women today are facing; yet no concrete substantiation of the statements accompanies them.

Lately there have sprung up a number of women's organizations with professed purposes of elevating women's position and obtaining women's rights; but most of them have sentimental motives only, with very little reservation for sound thinking based on accurate facts.

In this situation, we venture to establish an institution in which one can study the history of women's social problems and make detailed investigations into the fundamental relations of man and woman. Consequently, this institution restricts its

activities to research. It does not participate actively in movements. And without restricting ourselves to anyone school of thought, religious sect, or class, we pledge ourselves to study impartially the problems of women on a factual basis.

Lastly, however, we add that, although primarily established for research as distinguished from propaganda, this institution shall offer every moral support in its power to the cause of elevating the position of women and advancing feminine rights.

This institute did a very fine piece of work in supplying facts and data to women's organizations which had been needing them. The activities of all the clubs were greatly improved. The Institute, also, began a campaign to get permission for women to enter the Imperial Universities on the same footing as men. University training had been withheld from women partly because of the expense involved but more especially because of the old Confucian attitude toward women and the fear of co-education.

Baroness Ishimoto and her group of friends soon saw that it would be necessary to join the suffrage groups already formed if they were to accomplish anything of significance. Theory needed to be joined to activity and all the women workers, being so few, were needed to unite in a common cause if their voice was to be heard.

The first suffrage movement was started by Miss Raicho Hira-tsuka who gathered a small group of women together having the courage to protest against unfair treatment in marriage, business and every other department of life. They were greatly encouraged by their first real success in 1922, when their agitation won the right for women to attend political meetings. Another group of

women who were very influential was the Women's Christian Temperance Union. They had been organized to promote prohibition, purity and peace, but had become somewhat discouraged because they had been able to accomplish so little in real social change. Mrs. Tsune Gauntlett, a Japanese woman who was married to an English Professor in the University of Commerce, was sent by the W.C.T.U. to London to attend the International Congress of Women's Suffrage and was so deeply impressed with the sincerity and dignity and ability of the suffrage leaders in America and Europe that she came back to Japan on fire to organize her countrywomen for suffrage. This report was a great surprise to the Japanese women for they had pictured the suffrage leaders in the West as rough, rude women bent on their own selfish interests. They responded to Mrs. Gauntlett's call and formed a sister organization to the western suffrage societies and elected Mrs. Ichimi Kubashiro President. She was a very strong well-trained Christian leader. Their first vision was a large one for women of such limited experience and they planned that their movement should include all women of whatever age, religion or class. They set about to form a union of all the organizations already working for the betterment of women's position. The Union was accomplished but just at this time the great earthquake of 1923 occurred and because of this the women centered all their attention on their sad task of rescue work, feeding the hungry and caring for the sick and wounded. This work, however, was the very factor needed to teach all classes how to work together and to teach the details

and pitfalls of women's organizations. There were many lessons for women to learn who had been raised under the old feudal system where women were supposed to have no thought or plans of their own and to depend entirely on men. Almost without planning it the various organizations gathered together and formed the Tokyo Federation of Women's Societies. In 1924 the Universal Manhood Suffrage Bill was passed and this gave the women new courage for their quiet crusade. The same year a new organization was formed to present the suffrage question to the Diet. In the following few years five distinct suffrage organizations were inaugurated. In 1932 a union was accomplished which in two years brought together 16 national societies pledged to work together for suffrage.

A very amusing story is told of the answer which the feminists received from the politicians, when, in 1927, the first petition was sent to the Diet. Baroness Ishimoto had been the leader in forming the Reijitsu Kai "Bright Sunshine Society", the purpose of which was to raise money to assist women who had no money for membership fees or contributions. Family opposition was so great in many cases that even rich women could not obtain the money to join a suffrage organization. Through this Club many friends and sympathizers were found and the women were greatly encouraged. They became brave enough to send their petition to the Diet. The Honorable Keisuke Mochizuke, Home Minister of the Seiyukai Party replied to their dignified document "Go back to your homes and wash your babies' clothes. That is the task assigned to you. You are entitled to that seat and no other."

Nevertheless politicians knew that that petition could never be completely shelved and that the women would present it every year until it was granted. The Minsei Cabinet followed Mochizuki's sarcastic group in a few months and Kinzo Adachi, the Home Minister, was sympathetic and did what he could for the women. The Bill was given a little more dignified attention than before, but it was a very much weakened request that passed the House of Representatives in 1930. It was not even given a hearing before the House of Peers. One nobleman spoke for all when he said:

In Japan there is an admirable ideal of knighthood, made for the protection of the weak. What an **impertinence** on the part of women to claim their rights when they are under men's perfect protection!

It was greatly feared by these men that the intrusion of women into public affairs would endanger the peace of the family system. But because the Bill passed even the House of Representatives the women felt that a great precedent had been set for their movement. There was a period of marked success for three years when the Manchurian problem changed the entire social and political attitude of the country. Since that time the Feminist movement has had little opportunity to bring its ideas and demands to the governing bodies.

For the past three years no public demonstrations have been made to bring the suffrage question to the fore but each year, while Parliament is in session, the Joint Committee of the various women's organizations meet in Tokyo. In 1934 sixteen national and local women's organizations, including the Proletariat Women's Association, held public meetings. They did not approach

the Diet at all as they realized that it would be useless. They made an outline for a thorough study of the situation and they are still pursuing that quiet but effective course. They passed the following resolutions which show that the women are becoming alert to all national problems and affairs. They show, too, a new self-confidence, the lack of which has been their weakest point. They resolved

1. To oppose the suggested change in the normal school educational system which lowers the standard of women.
2. To request that women be given the opportunity to serve in school administration.
3. To request the amendment of articles in government law which are not favorable to women.
4. To request that laws for the protection of women in industry be passed.
5. To request that the principle of birth control be approved and suitable laws regulating its administration be passed.
6. To request the abolition of legal prostitution.
7. To request laws for the protection of mothers and children.
8. To request that the government give adequate support to families of sick and wounded soldiers.
9. To oppose big budget appropriations for the army and navy.
10. To request that the government give special care to prohibit the publication of articles or books which excite war sentiments.
11. To try to promote the love of peace and opposition to war in Japan.
12. To study the best ways of cooperating with women in other countries in promotion of the cause of international peace.

13. To send a request to Mr. Henderson urging further effort in the work of disarmament.

Miss Koto Yamamoto says:

Although Japanese women have no vote they have found ways of using their influence in municipal affairs in many places. In Tokyo the women have formed an organization with the purpose of fighting against the corruption of the Tokyo Municipal government. At the time of the election in 1933 this organization had thousands of pamphlets printed and distributed urging the public to vote for men of higher character. In consequence of this, six of the candidates who were not well qualified failed to receive the support of Tokyo citizens. In 1934 this organization, with the cooperation of 16 other women's organizations, fought against the new taxes which Tokyo tries to levy. Women were especially opposed to a tax of 35 to 95 sen on those citizens whose income is 70 yen per month and the plan to collect from households five yen per year for one servant and 15 yen for two servants. These taxes would bring unemployment among maid servants, lower their wages, increase their working hours, or put a burden of heavier labor on them. In some cases both employer and employee would be paying taxes on the same work.*

The women's organizations of Japan are very internationally minded in sentiment and in the plans for their work. Their constitution says:

This organization is composed of representatives of women's organizations in Japan which are self-supporting and are of national scope in their work. The Standing Committee aims to facilitate cooperation and communication with organizations of other countries. It also aims to bring about closer relationships among its affiliated bodies.**

It has close connection with the Pan-Pacific women's Conference, Joint Standing Committee of Women's Organizations in Geneva, Disarmament Committee of Women's Organizations in Geneva, and the International Council of Women. Organizations which are

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Yamamoto, Koto, Japan Christian Year Book, 1927

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Ibid

affiliated are:

The Federation of Primary School women Teachers Association of Japan

The Woman's Suffrage League of Japan

The National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Associations of Japan

The Socialist Women's Federation

The Women's Christian Temperance Union of Japan

The Women's Peace Association of Japan

The Young women's Buddhist Association of Japan.

In "The Changing Fabric of Japan" Mr. Kennedy has a chapter on The Women's Movement. He concludes the chapter with these sentences:

So far as the national vote is concerned, the demand is still too small to merit serious consideration. It is generally conceded, therefore, that the first step must be to raise the social position of women, rather than to grant them an extension of political rights, and that equal rights of property are more urgently required than equality of political rights. One by one the old discriminations imposed by the family system of China and Buddhistic teaching in general and Confucian ethics in particular and by the Samurai Code are being abolished, and Japanese women are being accorded rights and privileges which for centuries past have been denied to them. It was due to the conditions of the times and to force of circumstances that they were deprived, little by little, of their freedom and placed so much under the thumb of their menfolk. It is likewise due to the changing circumstances of the past half century and to other outside causes that they are gradually gaining their freedom. In the ordinary course of events, therefore, the next fifteen or twenty years are likely to see the bulk of the old discriminatory treatment removed.

If both the authorities and the women are wise, they will let things take their natural course and will use no artificial means either to retard or expedite the movement unduly. Any attempt to slow

it up unreasonably would probably result in the appearance of militant methods on the part of a section of women; for Japanese women, despite their usual docility, have been lacking neither in spirit nor in courage. It was a party of fisherwomen who started the famous Rice Riots of 1918, and Japanese history is filled with instances showing what the women of the country can do when aroused. On the other hand, any attempt to hasten the emancipation movement without good reason would result in too great a jolt to the whole social fabric of Japan. "Hurry slowly" seems to be the motto of the accredited leaders of the movement and of the country's legislators as well.*

One thing certainly is shown by a study of Japanese women's leadership in the twentieth century, and that is that Japanese women are making history as in no previous era. There are no female reigning Empresses, but women are becoming increasingly influential in every walk of life.

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Kennedy, M.D., The Changing Fabric of Japan, p.148

Allusions are made in the following chapters to persons and events already referred to in earlier chapters, but it has seemed essential to recall them in their religious setting.

THE INFLUENCE OF SHINTOISM ON JAPANESE WOMEN

The amalgamation of religions in Japan is a very difficult thing for foreigners to understand. The average Japanese person will hesitate to answer the question, "What is your religion?" Very few, even among the most pious, have one distinct set of beliefs. The religion of Japan is not Shintoism, Buddhism or Confucianism, but an amalgam of all three, with sometimes a fourth added, Christianity. "The average Japanese learns about the gods and draws inspiration for his patriotism from Shinto, maxims for his ethical and social life from Confucius and his hope of what he regards as salvation from Buddhism."*

Long before there were any written records or rituals in Japan, active devotional religion existed. Poems, songs, chants and liturgies, which are the only survivals of a system of religion which was not even named until after foreign religions came to Japan, are still extant. The unwritten religions of primitive Japan which later contributed, each its part, to the religion known as Shintoism were Animism or Shamanism, Fetichism, Phallacism, Tree and Serpent Worship, mythology and mythical Zoology.

Earth, air, and water teemed with beings which had sinister meaning and purposes. Japan has, through all the ages, suffered constantly from volcanoes, earthquakes, famines, landslides, tornadoes and ravages of leprosy, cholera and other diseases.

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Kishimoto, Nobuta, The Future of Religion in Japan, Paper Read at The World's Parliament of Religions.
vol. II, Chicago, 1893.

These were all caused by the evil spirits, according to the primitive religions. These inferior spirits were worshipped and propitiated by rites and incantations. Children and young maidens were often put under a spell by these spirits and were turned into half human and bestial forms. Fauns, satyrs, naiads, sphinxes populated the mountains and the rivers. A menagerie of mythical monsters ruled the world of superstition created by these primitive people. Every stick and stone had life and power to render either good or evil to him who came in contact with it. The stick, or the stone, or any inanimate object, became a medium between man and the countless spirits that might either bless or harm him. Amulets and charms were used to placate the spirits. Even pieces of paper, shells and bits of clinking metal were used as fetichs--media of communication with the mysterious forces.

Questions pertaining to life, creation and fatherhood had to be explained. Phallacism was the early answer, and even today there are shrines in the country places where the male organ, fashioned in stone or plaster, is worshipped. Trees and serpents, rocks and rivers, and other inanimate objects of nature, were worshipped because the kami (deities) resided in them. In the ancient stories men and women change into serpents and slide off into the sea or the marshes. Even the gods and goddesses slip away sometimes in scaly forms. The first Japanese book, the Kojiki, gives us the theology, mythology and the outline of history of these earliest Japanese people. The Kojiki is the Shinto Bible.

The term Shinto was not used until it was necessary to have

a name for the ancient faith, so as to distinguish it from Buddhism. Shinto, "the way of the kami or gods", had to be separated from Buddhism, "the way of the Buddhas". The coming of Buddhism in the sixth century and the implanting, on the soil of Japan, of a priesthood, temples, rituals, codes of morals and a rigid disciplinary set of dogmas, reacted on the national beliefs and traditions so as to compel their collection and codification. The Emperor Kwammu commanded that the mythology, poetry and ritual, which had been passed from mouth to mouth, be committed to writing. The sacred writings sprang out of the religion. Griffis says:

Customs, ritual, faith and prayer existed long before they were written about or recorded in ink. Moreover, the philosophy came later than the practice, the deeds before the myths. Not until two centuries after the coming of Buddhism and of Asiatic civilization did it occur to the Japanese to reduce to writing the floating legends and various cycles of traditions which had grown up luxuriantly in different parts of the Empire.*

The most significant feature of the early unnamed religion was the lack of a code of morals. The Japanese have always held that morals are the invention of wicked people like the Chinese. Japan is the land of the gods; all Japanese are in direct line of the gods and so are pure and holy. They have always done right naturally. This has led to a worship of ancestors as gods. As the tribes became organized and formed into clans, the Mikado or Yamato clan, while recognizing the earth gods of the aborigines, proclaimed the Mikado as representative and vice-regent of Heaven and demanded that the gods of earth, mountain, wind and sea obey him. In this Emperor-worship may be found the secret of Japan's

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Griffis, W.E., The Religions of Japan, p.47

unity and strength.

When Buddhism came from China, the people were at first bewildered as to which was the true religion until Kobo Daishi cleverly solved the problem by declaring that the Buddhist gods, even Shaka, himself, were but incarnations of the Shinto deities, and Buddhism was only an enlightenment of the old religion.

The subject of our concern is the effect of this system on Japanese women. The immediate effect came from the prominence of ancestor worship. In pure Shinto worship, women were accorded a much higher place than in either Buddhism or Confucianism, but in the late centuries Buddhism and Shintoism have been so intermixed that it is almost impossible to separate the two forces. Hearn says:

The real religion of Japan is ancestor worship. In the course of thousands of years this original cult has undergone modifications and assumed various shapes, but everywhere its fundamental characteristics remain unchanged. Without including the different Buddhist forms of ancestor worship, we find three distinct rites of purely Japanese origin. These Japanese forms of the cult are classed together under the name of Shinto. The three forms of Shinto worship of ancestors are the Domestic Cult, the Communal Cult and the State Cult, or, in other words, the worship of family ancestors, the worship of clan or tribal ancestors, and the worship of Imperial ancestors. The first is the religion of the home; the second is a religion of the local divinity or tutelary god; the third is the national religion.*

Affecting women most is the religion of the home. The existing family religion is a comparatively modern development and comes from the introduction from China about the eighth century of the spirit-tablets.

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Hearn, Lafcadio, Japan An Interpretation, p.27

In Shinto, as in the old Greek religions, to die was to enter into a state of super-human power and to become capable of conferring benefit or inflicting misfortune upon the living by supernatural means. But, strange to say, the dead are dependent for their comfort and happiness on the living; only through the prayers and devotion of their kindred can they find peace and rest. The ghost body must have shelter and offerings. So in Japan we find the mountain sides filled with little niches cut out of the rock and images set into them, before which rice and cakes and all kinds of offerings are laid. Every event in the world, good and evil, is the work of the dead, and all human actions, good and bad, are controlled by the dead.

In practically every home in Japan there is a shrine devoted to the worship of the spirits of the ancestors of the house. The shrine is a model of a Shinto temple fixed on a shelf in a corner of the room six feet from the floor. Inside this shrine are placed thin tablets of white wood on which are written the names of the household dead. Many families have Buddhist household shrines, as well. These are much more elaborate and are made of lacquered wood, carved and gilded and containing the photographs of the ancestors. Prayers are repeated and offerings placed before these tablets every day. Even in Christian homes these shrines are often kept, and a few Christian symbolical objects added. The duties of placing the offerings before the shrines and repeating prayers daily were at first supposed to be performed by the head of the house, but now the business of life

has made it necessary to add these to the woman's daily program.

Hearn says:

To forget or neglect them, to treat them with rude indifference, is the proof of an evil heart; to cause them shame by ill-conduct, to disgrace their name by bad actions, is the supreme crime. They represent the moral experience of the race: whosoever denies that experience denies them also, and falls to the level of the beast, or below it. They represent the unwritten law, the traditions of the commune, the duties of all to all: whosoever offends against these, sins against the dead and finally, they represent the mystery and the invisible: to Shinto belief, at least, they are gods.

It is to be remembered, of course, that the Japanese word for gods, kami, might be closely rendered by some such expression as "The Superiors", "The Higher Ones"; and it was formerly applied to living rulers as well as to deities and ghosts. But it implies considerably more than the idea of a disembodied spirit; for, according to old Shinto teaching, the dead became world-rulers. They were the cause of all natural events,--of winds, rains, and tides, of buddings and ripenings, of growth and decay, of everything desirable or dreadful. They formed a kind of subtler element,--an ancestral aether,--universally extending and unceasingly operating. Their powers, when united for any purpose, were irresistible; and in time of national peril they were evoked en masse for aid against the foe. Thus, to the eyes of fate, behind each family ghost there extended the measureless shadowy power of countless kami; and the sense of duty to the ancestor was deepened by dim awe of the forces controlling the world,--the whole invisible Vast. The primitive Shinto conception of the universe was filled with ghosts;--to later Shinto conception the ghostly condition was not limited by place or time, even in the case of individual spirits. "Although," wrote Hirata, "the home of the spirits is in the Spirit-House, they are equally present wherever they are worshipped,--being gods, and therefore ubiquitous."

Out of the worship of ancestors evolved a Religion of Filial Piety. Filial piety still remains

the supreme virtue among civilized peoples possessing an ancestor cult. Here piety means the religious sense of household duty, reverence for the dead as well as the sentiment of duty toward the living; the affection of children to parents and the affection of parents to children; the mutual duties of husband and wife; the duties likewise of sons-in-law and daughters-in-law to the family as a body; the duties of servant to master, and of master to dependent,--all these were included under the term. The family itself was a religion; the ancestral home a temple, and so we find the family and the home to be in Japan, even at the present day. Filial piety in Japan does not mean only the duty of children to parents and grandparents: it means still more, the cult of the ancestors, reverential service to the dead, the gratitude of the present to the past, and the conduct of the individual in relation to the entire household.*

The first duty of filial piety is always to provide for the perpetuation of the family cult. The good fortune of the household always depends on the observance of the rites of ancestor worship. The greatest possible calamity that could befall a household would be that there should be no male heir to make the offerings. So, of course, marriage was obligatory. No excuse whatever existed for being childless. A barren wife was divorced without trial. Or, if the husband wished to keep her in the home, she must accept concubines until a male heir was born. In old Japanese belief the father was the creator, and the mother only the vehicle. The duty of maintaining the cult rested with the man and not the woman. The woman shared in the cult but could not maintain it. Daughters, when they married, died to their own families, and thereafter devoted themselves to the husband's home cult, so they could not be depended on to maintain the cult of their own home. From this, we may trace the beginning

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Hearn, *Lafcadio*, Op. cit., p.54

of the idea that the female is not equal to the male. In only one case could the daughter remain attached to her own family cult through life as has been pointed out*, and that was when there was no male heir, and a husband was adopted for the oldest daughter. He took the wife's name and became the family heir. There was a period in Japanese history when, in some districts, it was the custom to keep all the children, so far as possible, within the original family by this system of adopted husbands and wives.

It is easy to see what power such a system would give to the male head of the family, and in fact, to all males. For if the head male should die, his place must be taken by the brother next in line. Everyone must obey the head. All females must obey the males, the wives the husbands, the sisters the brothers; not only obey them but sacrifice anything and everything for their welfare. This also included the system of seniority; the younger brother must obey the elder brother and the younger sister the elder sister. All this led to the father and eldest son being served first at meals and given all the best of everything in the home. Gradually, women came to a more and more unassuming, and oftentimes to a more and more degrading, position in the home.

All the customs of marriage grew out of the above principles. The daughter-in-law could be dismissed any time the husband's family felt that she was not fulfilling all their demands. Upon marriage the wife must revere the ancestors of her husband as her own. When she leaves her parents' home, funeral ceremonies are performed on her departure.**

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Attitudes of the Japanese Toward Sex and Marriage, Chap. IV

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Ibid

Since the question of marriage was so important to both families, it could not be left to the judgment of the young people, and so there grew up the system of marriage common in Japan already described,* whereby the bride is chosen by a go-between and presented to the boy's family for acceptance or refusal. She is merely a chattel, an organ of convenience and is not supposed to have any voice in her future. If she bears a male child, she is accorded good treatment, and she may, by her own charm and good judgment, make for herself a place of great power in the family. This was usually the case until Buddhism came in, bringing the Chinese idea of the inferior nature of woman. Buddhism taught that woman had no soul and no chance of salvation in the next world.

In time, even the natural rights of parenthood were restricted in the Japanese home. Marriage was for the family, and children were regarded as belonging to the family rather than to the parents. Therefore, in the case of divorce, the children were retained by the family group. This is one of the rankest injustices accorded to women in Japan. Paternal power controlled everything. Hearn writes:

The paternal power controlled everything,--the right to life and liberty,--the right to marry, or to keep the wife or husband already espoused,--the right to one's own children,--the right to hold property,--the right to hold office,--the right to choose or follow an occupation. The family was a despotism, but the absolutism prevailing in the patriarchal family had its justification in a religious belief,--in the conviction that everything should be sacrificed for the sake of the cult, and every member of the family should

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be ready to give up even life if necessary to assure the perpetuity of the succession. Remembering this, it becomes easy to understand why, even in communities otherwise advanced in civilization, it should have seemed right that a father could kill or sell his children. The sale of a daughter in time of extreme need might save a house from ruin; the crime of a son might result in the extinction of a cult through the ruin of the family. Filial piety exacted submission to such sacrifice for the sake of the cult.*

In Pure Shinto there are as many goddesses as gods, and their being worshipped equally makes it probable that, had not other religions come in, women might have gained a much higher relative position in the life of the Japanese. The supreme ruler, the mikado, himself, claims descent from the sun goddess. There are in Japan 195,000 Shinto shrines, and many of them are dedicated to goddesses. All worship the Goddess of the Silkworms and the Goddess of Rice. Shrines are often erected to women who have been very brave or self-sacrificing or to those who have borne very unjust treatment. They have been erected to women who have pined away for grief after absence of the husband or to those who have committed suicide at the news of the husband's death, or to those who have joined the husband in the death act.

Women have always been allowed to act as priestesses in Shinto temples. In the temples of Ise where the Imperial ancestors are worshipped down to the fourteenth century the high priestess was the daughter of the Emperors. Professor Anesaki says, "Women have always served as priestesses and are expected to be virgins, though not necessarily for life. The most important of the priestesses was a royal Princess who served the sun

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Hearn, Lafcadio, Op. cit., p.81

goddess at Ise. There were similar priestesses in other sanctuaries recruited from noble families, while the dancers were women of no rank.**

Mr. Hearn writes:

Not the least interesting part of the Shinto ceremony is the sacred dance. While the gods are supposed to be partaking of the food and wine set out before their shrines, the girl priestesses, robed in crimson and white, move gracefully to the sound of drums and flutes,--waving fans, or shaking bunches of tiny bells as they circle about the sanctuary. According to our western notions, the performance of the miko (dancing girl) could hardly be called dancing. But it is a graceful spectacle and very curious,--for every step and attitude is regulated by traditions of unknown antiquity. At the shrines of Ise, Kasuga, Kompira, and several others which I visited, the ordinary priestesses are children; and when they have reached the nubile age, they retire from the service. At Kitzuki the priestesses are grown-up women: their office is hereditary; and they are permitted to retain it even after marriage. Formerly, the miko was more than a mere officiant; the songs which she is still obliged to learn indicate that she was originally offered to the gods as a bribe. Even yet her touch is holy; the grain sown by her hand is blessed. At some time in the past she seems to have been also a pythoness: the spirits of the gods possessed her and spoke through her lips. All the poetry in this most ancient of religions centers in the figure of its little Vestal,--child-bride of ghosts,--as she flutters, like some wonderful white-and-crimson butterfly before the shrine of the invisible. Even in these years of change, when she must go to the public school, she continues to represent all that is delightful in Japanese girlhood; for her special home training keeps her reverent, innocent, dainty in all her ways and worthy to remain the pet of the gods.**

While women were absolutely ruled by men in Shinto homes, still they had religious rules for living imposed upon them as

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Anesaki, Masaharu, History of Japanese Religion, p.46

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Hearn, Lafcadio, Op. cit., p.158

rigorously as upon the men. The life of the individual worshipper, both of men and women, was ordered not merely in relationship to the family and the community, but even in relation to inanimate things. Whatever the occupation, some god ruled it. The carpenter had to perform his duties so as to honor the deity of the carpenters, and the seamstress had, on certain holidays, to make offerings to the spirit of needles. The spinners and the weavers were obliged to revere the Weaving-goddess and the Goddess of Silkworms. In Samurai households the wives and daughters had to keep the armour in beautiful shining condition so as to attract the gods of victory.*

Gardens, too, were holy; and there were rules to be observed in their management, lest offense should be given to the gods of trees and flowers. Carefulness, cleanliness, dustlessness, were everywhere in force as religious obligations. It has often been remarked in these latter days that the Japanese do not keep their public offices, their railway stations, their new factory buildings thus scrupulously clean, but edifices built in foreign style with foreign material, under foreign supervision, and contrary to every local tradition, must seem to the old-fashioned thinking people, God-forsaken places; and servants amid such unhallowed surroundings do not feel the invisible about them, the weight of pious custom, the silent claim of beautiful and simple things to human respect.**

Shinto Revival

In the beginning of the seventeenth century there was a revival of Shintoism in alliance with Confucianism. During the eighteenth century, Shintoism was purged of many foreign elements, and the old primitive religion of Japan was restored. The long

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The Rise of the Military Power, Chap. I.

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Hearn, Lafcadio, Ibid

peace of this period strengthened the belief in the divine dignity of the throne and brought Shintoism again before the people as the only true and pure religion for Japan. Motoori Norinaga, 1730-1801, was the pioneer of this Pure Shinto Movement. He claimed that the Japanese and their Shinto, when purged of all foreign accretions and influences, represented the pure and therefore the best inheritance of humanity from the divine ages. He was followed by Hirata Atsutane, 1776-1843, who even more strongly emphasized the divine character of the Japanese. In 1868 a Bureau of Ecclesiastical Affairs, Jingi-Jimu-Kyoku, as its first act separated Shinto from Buddhism and made of the former a kind of state ceremonial. Buddhism remained under proscription until 1872 when the Ecclesiastical Bureau recognized both Shinto and Buddhist priests as moral instructors.

In the first half of the nineteenth century we have a unique feature of Pure Shinto in the appearance of many popular teachers. Their followers make up the so-called Shinto Sects in Buddhism today. The founders of three of these Sects, Tenrikyo, Omotokyo and Tenshokyo were women.

One of these women teachers was Kino, 1756-1826, a woman of simple peasant origin. Her religion remained unnamed until 1927, though it had a fairly large following many years before this. Its official title is still simply "This Time". Kino had been an orphan and had had an unhappy marriage which ended in divorce. She worked as a servant until she was 46 years of age when she had a vision calling her to preach. She was told in the vision

that she alone had the power to reveal the truth that could save mankind. She believed that she had been given the real and final message of God, whom she called Nyorai. She borrowed this term from Buddhism, although her teachings have more of a tinge of Christianity than of Buddhism. She taught that the world was created by one God who is omnipotent and whose principal characteristic is love and whose greatest desire is the salvation of mankind. There are several points in her teachings which are so like Christianity that such authorities as Professor Anasaki feel that it is most likely that she had been influenced in some way by Christian teaching. Professor Anasaki gives these points of similarity:

1. God, the Omnipotent Creator
2. The love of God for his created children
3. Salvation for all
4. The creation of a first man and then of his fellows and their fall
5. The evils and sins of humanity
6. The dependence of all on God for salvation
7. The command given to Kino to save all through belief in her, this being man's only chance to be saved
8. Her great agony before her death
9. Her statement of her propitiatory suffering for all
10. The name which she used for herself, Rusen, is a kind of religious title designating her saviour-ship.

Kino was very active in her propaganda work and preaching for 25 years before her death in 1826. After her death her followers organized in communistic groups. They had kept a record of all her utterances and in their meetings they repeat her words and engage in prayerful meditation. At one time they were persecuted, but they reorganized under the leadership of an ex-Zen

monk. The home of Kino is still the headquarters of the Sect, and there were in 1928 more than 60 simple monasteries which are the dwellings of the monks and nuns and serve as meeting-houses as well.

Miki of Yamato

The most famous of these women founders of Shinto cults was Miki of Yamato, 1798-1887. She is often called the Mary Baker Eddy of Japan. Dr. Anasaki gives the following account of her life and mission.

Miki of Yamato, who being possessed of a god, announced the arrival of the "important moment" when she was forty years old. She had passed her childhood in pious devotion to the Buddha, had lived her married life as a submissive wife but showing much charity to outsiders. In 1838 she was possessed by a god who called himself the Lord of Heaven and commanded her whole family to dedicate everything to his cause for the sake of mankind. From that time her free giving became so extravagant that her husband and relatives regarded her as having gone mad. In poverty and struggles, she persisted in her faith, in her god and her mission. When her husband died, her family had almost nothing left of its property, and her only sympathizer was her daughter. The mother, having forsaken everything of the world, now appeared as the apostle of the new religion which amounted to the belief in the God of Heaven and to the admonition to purify one's self. The human being, she taught, is the abode of divine charity, and the only obstacle is greed together with all that it implies. Get rid of every stain of the soul, restore its original purity. Everything will follow and end in happiness--union with the Divine Spirit. The mother and daughter effected mental cures in the firm belief that all ills and maladies were simply due to illusion caused by greed and associate vices. This teaching gradually attracted believers, and in the course of further fifteen years the mother was regarded

by her followers as the saviour of the world, which was to undergo a remarkable transformation because of her appearance. They were persecuted but the following grew, so that she was a very prominent religious leader in her province at the time when the Tokugawa fell, and the new government was inaugurated. Thereafter, the last twenty years of her life were a period of the rapid growth of her religion in spite of persecution renewed under the new regime. During this period she started writing down the divine messages in verses of thirty-one syllables, and she also organized a method of worship with dances and movements of the hands. Besides the simple teaching of the purity of heart and the practice of healing, she amplified her idea by teaching that there was a spot near her home where the Divinity would come down and consummate the transformation of the world. By consecrating this spot, she believed she had prepared for the coming of a new world, a restoration of the age of the gods, of which she was the prophetess, to be realized in the future.*

During recent years, Miki's son has been the head of the Tenryko Cult, and it is said to number over six million followers. On the spot consecrated by Miki there have been built kindergartens, primary schools, a boy's high school, a girl's high school, a university, the largest theological school in Japan, a huge temple seating thousands of people and the largest and most modern library in all Japan. Every person who joins the cult is supposed to do some missionary work, like the Mormons. Many of them come to the theological school for a few week's training, and often there are as many as five thousand studying in the theological school at one time. All properties are supposed to be turned over to the temple and in return for these gifts and services, they are insured of salvation in the next world. Lately this Sect has been in trouble with the government because of

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Anasaki, Masaharu, Op. cit., p.313

misrepresented tax returns. The head of this Sect is said to be the largest taxpayer in all Japan. There are murmurings amongst the followers concerning the honesty of those who hold the funds.

Dr. Anasaki says that "a noteworthy point common to all Shintoists or teachers of popular religion is a sense of discontent whether articulate or not; in fact, in many cases, almost unconscious, against an existing regime social and political. Those who give utterance to this discontent have worked more in political and social lines. Those religiously minded are more likely to go quietly to the temples with a sense of some approaching world change, mostly expressed as the coming of a new kingdom of god or gods. In this way the social atmosphere of the first half of the nineteenth century was redolent with something verging on the Messianic conception of the Jews in the first century before Christ. It is, then, no wonder that a simple peasant woman like Kino or Miki preached a gospel not without resemblance to Christianity, even if the suspected influence of the ancient Kirishitan religion counted for nothing."*

Another modern Sect of Shinto, Konkokyo, which is called a modern Japanese monotheism, is interesting in this study because of its attitude toward women. This Sect has grown up contemporarily with the Japanese Christian Movement. It has found its resources entirely in the Japanese nation itself and has achieved a membership of 600,000, over twice the number of adherents of Christianity. The founder was the farmer-saint of Otani, Kawate Bungiro. He, like Jesus, came to the conviction that the Great

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Anasaki, Masaharu, Op. cit., p.316

Father of all life had come to self-knowledge in himself. He claimed his teaching came from God and that he was God's medium. He set out deliberately to find out all he could about God and during this study in 1858 a new vision came to him. He was conscious of a sudden God-possession--a revelation that God was one and good and never completely separated from those who sincerely trust him. He called this God Kaneno Kami, which might be translated as the "God who combines things" or "the spiritual power that gives unity to experience". A unique feature of his teaching was his attitude toward women. He said, "Woman is to man what the field is to farming. All that is valuable comes from the fertile land."* In this Sect women may preach and hold services of all kinds; they may become authoritative teachers just as men. This high regard for women extends to educational activities. Their training school for workers is co-educational, and one-third of the 150 students are women. Women are housed in separate dormitories but attend classes on equal footing with men. Kagawa says of these sects:

Such Shinto Sects as Tenryko and Konkokyo originated not as moral movements but simply from a desire to find physical healing through the help of religion. It is utterly futile, therefore, to expect that as a result of the rapid spread of these Sects, religious or moral revolution will occur, world peace will be promoted and economic reforms will be realized. For this reason, there should not be and cannot be any comparison of the spread of Christianity with such religions as these. Furthermore, belief in such a religion as Tenryko does not necessarily commit man to participation in anti-prostitution and temperance movements. Compare this with the demand made of the Christian: a new birth which issues in a reborn conscience

and the dedication of body, soul and spirit to God. Many falter when they face the difficulties of the Christian way. These Shinto Sects, however, do have and keep a strong sense of loyalty and filial piety. Their adherents are ardent nationalists. Beyond this they do not go. The modern revival of Shinto is the most significant social phenomenon of today. In this Hegelian nationalistic religion there is no element of a new moral renovation.*

Because of the easy demands and the simple ritual of these cults (in Tenrykyo, almost like kindergarten physical exercises), many women join their ranks and go about the country propagating the teachings. However, none of these religions are making any effort to raise the status of women in the home, to change customs or laws that she may have social justice, or to give her any standing by which she may have a part in the social changes which are bound to take place in the days to come.

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Kagawa, Toyohiko, Christ in Japan, p.91

THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIANISM ON JAPANESE WOMEN

Confucius, of all truly historical personages, is today and for twenty-three centuries has been, honored by the largest number of followers. He was a great teacher in China's Feudal Period. He did not claim to have originated anything new, but, on the contrary, said clearly that he did not introduce any new ideas or express any thoughts of his own which were not based on the teachings of the ancients. He was editor, compiler, defender and proclaimer of the ancient religions. His conversations, discussions and notes were collected by his followers in a volume called "The Confucian Analects" which is one of the four books constituting the most sacred portion of Chinese philosophy. He did not change the ancient religion, but emphasized the social and political duties of man. He slighted the Godward side of man's life. His teachings relate to duties between man and man, to propriety and etiquette, ceremony and usage. He said, "To give one's self to the duties due to man and, while respecting spiritual beings, to keep aloof from them, is wisdom. Honor the gods and keep them far from you."*

The Confucian system is greatly overbalanced on the moral and ceremonial side as compared to spiritual development. Some claim it has never been a religion but a system of morals--a code. Chamberlain says, "He confined himself to practical details of morals and government and took submission to parents and political rulers as the cornerstone of his system. The result is a

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Legge, James, Religions of China, p.140

set of moral truths--some would say truisms--of a very narrow scope, and of dry ceremonial observances, political rather than personal."*

China has for ages been an agnostic nation, and Confucius is largely responsible for this. The Emperor was the Son of Heaven and the only one who was supposed to approach Deity. The people were cut off from any relationship to God, and so they wandered into every phase of polytheism and idolatry. The religion of the educated Chinese was a static philosophy based on Confucianism. The norm for all national and family government was the code of Confucian ethics. These are summed up in the doctrine of the "Five Relations": Sovereign and Minister; Father and Son; Husband and Wife; Elder Brother and Younger Brother; Friends. Confucius includes no supreme relation between God and man. He put before the people only an earthly goal.

Griffis says that because Confucianism ignored the spiritual side of man's life "he cut the tap roots of all true progress and therefore is largely responsible for the arrested development of China."**

Japanese Confucianism

Confucianism was brought into Japan as early as 285 A.D. About that time a scholar, Achiki, came over from Korea bringing new ideas and a new culture. He was warmly welcomed, and he advised the young Princes, who sat at his feet, to send for Wani, a great Korean teacher and scholar. Wani came and became the

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Chamberlain, B. H., Things Japanese, p.70

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Griffis, W.E., Religions of Japan, p.104

tutor of the sons of the Emperor Ojin. Achiki and Wani introduced Chinese writing, Chinese books and Chinese philosophy. Probably the "Confucian Analects" were brought into Japan at this time. One of the Princes taught by Wani became the Emperor Nintoku. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Confucian teachings soon spread over the land, especially among the higher classes.

In the Nara period, we find that Shotoku Taishi, "the Constantine of Buddhism", encouraged Confucian ethics and Chinese learning. In 593 A.D. he sent a shipload of Japanese to China to study Chinese culture and to bring back teachers. Prince Shotoku formulated the first so-called Constitution in Japan. This document shows very plainly the influence which Confucianism, even at this early date, had upon him.

The first school founded to teach the Confucian classics was sponsored by Emperor Tenchi soon after 662 A.D., when he came to the Throne. This school was developed later by Emperor Temmu and, in his reign, became a university. Other schools were subsequently founded in each province on this pattern.

Under Emperor Koken, 749-758 A.D., every family was required to own a copy of the "Classic of Filial Piety". Confucius was added to the list of deities and was worshipped in Japan. Griffis says that, in China, Confucius was never deified, although his image stands in thousands of temples and in every school, where he is deeply revered.

One of the early Confucianists in Japan was Sugawara

Michizane, 854-903 A.D., who is worshipped now throughout Japan as Tenjin, the God of Learning, and school boys still offer their brush-writing before his shrine. He was a great Confucian scholar, a famous calligrapher, and a pattern of loyalty to the royal house. Because of his popularity at Court he was hated and finally exiled to the island of Kyushu, where he died of a broken heart. To him is given the credit for having changed the emphasis and principal objective of Confucianism. In China, among the five human relations, the principal emphasis was laid on filial piety, but in Japan Sugawara changed this emphasis to the relation between sovereign and subject, lord and retainer.

During the Kamakura period, 1192-1333 A.D., Confucianism was very influential in China and received a great impulse from the teachings of Chusius, a follower of Confucius. The Zen priests were much attracted to the new philosophical Confucianism, and it was taught even in the Buddhist temples.

Griffis says:

For a thousand years from 600-1600 A.D., the Buddhist religious teachers assisted in promulgating the ethics of Confucius; for, during all this time, there was harmony between the various Buddhisms and the simple undeveloped system of Chinese Confucianism. Slight modifications were made by individual teachers, and emphasis was laid upon this or that feature, while out of the soil of Japanese feudalism were growths of certain virtues as phases of loyalty, phenomenal beyond those in China. Nevertheless, during all this time, the Japanese teachers of the Chinese ethics were as students who did but recite what they learned. Though the apparatus of distribution was early known, block printing having been borrowed from the Chinese from the ninth century and movable types learned from the Koreans in the

sixteenth century, the Chinese Classics were not printed as a body until 1615.*

In the seventeenth century, Iyeyasu, the great warrior, set about to rebuild the national culture. In 1614 he issued his final decree against Christian teaching and established Confucianism as the state religion. Confucian schools were established in all the chief cities. The Chinese Classics were printed and widely distributed. The accession of the Manchu Tartars to the throne of China sent a large number of Chinese scholars to Japan. They gathered a large following and made a very great impression on the people. They were welcomed warmly by the Tokugawa Princes and for a considerable period became the teachers of Japan. For over two hundred years a discipline in Chinese ethics, literature and history, constituted the education of boys and men in Japan. Every Samurai was drilled in the Confucian Code. All Japanese social, official and intellectual life was permeated with this new spirit. Their "world" was that of the Chinese, and all outside it belonged to "barbarians".

Griffis writes:

Japan's civil wars, which caused the almost total destruction of books and manuscripts, seemed also the triumph of Buddhism, which meant the atrophy of the national intellect. When, after the long feuds and battles of the Middle Ages, Confucianism stepped the second time into the Land of Brave Scholars, it was no longer with the simple rules of conduct and ceremonial of the ancient days, nor was it as the ally of Buddhism. It came as an armed man in full panoply of harness and weapons. It entered to drive Buddhism out and to defend the intellect of the educated against the wiles of priestcraft. It

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Griffis, W. E., Op. cit., p.133

was a full-blown system of pantheistic rationalism with a scheme of philosophy that to the far-Oriental mind seemed perfect as a rule both of faith and practise. It came in a form that was received as religion, for it was not only morality "touched" but infused with motion. Nor were the emotions kindled, those of the partisan only, but rather also those of the devotee and the martyr. Henceforth Buddhism, with its inventions, its fables, and its endless dogmatism, was for the common people, for women and children, but not for the Samurai. The new Confucianism came to Japan as the system of Chu Hi. For three centuries this system had held sway over the intellect of China. For two centuries and a half it dominated the minds of the Samurai so that the majority of them were Confucianists, so far as they were anything.*

The followers of Confucius have been divided into three schools in Japan.

The Shushi School

Buddhist priests introduced this school into Japan and it is to their credit that culture and learning were preserved during the dark ages of Japan's history. The followers of this school laid emphasis on practical conduct rather than on intellectual speculation. This was the orthodox Confucian school during the three hundred years of the Tokugawa Shogunate. It was the most influential of the three schools. The best known names of this school were Fujiwara Seikwa, Muro Kuiso and Kaibara Ekken. We are here particularly interested in the name of Ekken, for he, perhaps, has influenced the position of women in Japan more than any other man. In the former chapters "Attitudes of the Japanese Toward the Education of Women" and "The Japanese Attitudes Toward Sex and Marriage", Ekken's code for women was commented on at

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Griffis, W. E., Op. cit., p.136

length. Even today his Onna Dai Gaku, "Woman's Great Learning", rules in Japanese homes in all matters pertaining to woman's position in marriage and in the home.

Wang Yang-ming School

This school is called "Yomei" in Japan. Connected with this school are Japan's most characteristic thinkers. They have been not only thinkers but practical men who tried to improve the conditions of the people. They taught that man may know the difference between good and evil and may attain to a higher life. Any man who comes to know his own true nature and endeavours to realize it may attain to the ideal man. The space in our bodies is connected with infinite space and is a part of it. Also, our minds are allied with the Infinite Mind. The Mind and the Infinite are one, and man may comprehend the universe with which he is connected. All sorrows and pleasures outside one's self are really his own. This belief in a Universal Mind was a step, Kagawa says, toward the Christian belief in one God. At least it prepared the Japanese mind so that it might make such a step.

The Classical School

This school was formed as a revolt against the other two. Its adherents were the Fundamentalists of Confucianism and went back to the original teachings of Confucius and Mencius. Yamaga Soko, one of the founders of the school, was called the "Father of Bushido", the spirit of knighthood in Japan. The followers of this school emphasized the practise of individual morality.

Bushido, the Japanese claim, is a union of the best in shintoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, but it grew largely out of the teachings of this classical Confucian school. Soko, himself, was the typical knight of Japan. Some of the subjects of his discussions and public lectures were "Know Thyself", "Follow After Truth", "Walk in the Path of Moral Conduct", "How to Polish the Mind-Cultivation of Virtue and Completion of Knowledge", "Self-Reflection", "Etiquette and Dignity". A strict code of feudalistic life was imposed on the nation; more strict than any code of any feudal period in the world's history. The word Samurai connotes a superior person, perfectly controlled and absolutely dedicated to the good of the State. Dr. Masaharu Anesaki, professor at the Tokyo Imperial University, in his "History of Japanese Religion", says:

One of the features of this age was a deepening gulf between the Samurai and the common people. For this were responsible both Confucian teaching and the class morality of Bushido, which worked jointly in confirming the prerogatives and biases of the Samurai class, in antagonism to the free activity and aspiration of the people. Orthodox Confucianism served the Rulers' purpose of keeping the people within fixed social restrictions using them as tools of the governors. Husbandry was valued as a source of the nation's wealth, but the peasants were considered to be mere producers of rice and clothing materials. Trade was thought to be a form of mere cunning, and the merchant was treated as a base and mean seeker of profit. Bushido became rather a code of class morality and education than the personal religion of the warrior it had been, and its discipline was naturally limited to that privileged class. Not only was the moral teaching of Bushido inapplicable to the common people, but any attempt of the people to imitate or emulate the ruling class, whether in life or in education, was

regarded as a transgression. Thus the demarcation between classes was growing more and more rigid. The people, being weary of confusion and war, gladly accepted the peace established by the military dictatorship; the government policies and official ethics had largely succeeded in enforcing rigid order; the result was a social structure of stratified classes, the Samurai rulers on top. The family meant not only a continuity of lineage but an unchangeable means of obtaining a livelihood on the hereditary soil and in solidarity with other families settled in the same commune. Any ambition for personal advancement or any aspiration for individual freedom on the part of anyone was regarded as a menace both to society and to his own family. Everyone enjoyed the security of his family life and the protection of the commune at the price of individuality. Morality under these conditions simply meant conforming to the social conventions and traditions of the commune.

The burden of these rigid social rules fell most severely upon the woman, and the consequences were manifested in the problems of sexual morality. In a conspicuous contrast to the height of her influence in the reign of Buddhist sentimentalism, a characteristic feature of Bushido was the debasement of woman and the consequent contempt for love and affection in general. The rise of the military man, together with Confucian ethics, led to the degradation of the position and dignity of woman in social life. Her sole virtue consisted in submission, the famous three-fold submission towards parents, husband, and sons, according to the stages of her life. Her activity was almost confined to the household; any sign of undue respect towards her on the part of a man was denounced as disgraceful to him, especially to a Samurai. Love affairs were nothing but wantonness, and the word for sexual love, koi, was associated with degeneracy. Marriage was contracted and arranged by the parents who did not pay as much attention to the inclination or desire of the persons concerned as to the ranks or properties of the families to be linked by the tie of marriage or the choice of the parents themselves.

Quite naturally, under these circumstances, the sexual instinct often sought irregular outlets,

that was partly an inheritance from the age of war and confusion but largely a product of the new age. Houses of ill-fame were established by government license in segregated settlements, which were regarded as outside the regular standards of morality. In spite of the many undesirable aspects of these resorts, they gave an opportunity for the display of defiance of conventional fetters and free play to the spirit of revolt cherished by the citizens against the ruling class. Wealth and rank often yielded there to gallantry; the women, too, exhibited otoko-gi, an unyielding spirit of manliness. Some of these, courtesans though they were, became strong heroines who asserted freedom and strength in repelling powerful lords or wealthy magnates, often sacrificing themselves for the sake of humbler lovers. Conflicts between convention and freedom, wealth and love, scrupulousness and dauntlessness, were the subjects of many tragedies or tragicomedies enacted in these places.

Not only love affairs between young people, but even the relations between husband and wife, suffered from the intervention of parents and relatives, even of neighbors. The interference was based on considerations or pretexts of family honor or the public opinion of the commune, either of which might be sufficient to divorce a loving couple. There were many cases of outbreaks, of revolt and desperate fights on the part of the strong or passionate, but more numerous were the cases of weaker characters yielding to the pressure of the intervention but becoming debauched out of despair. Another way of solution often resorted to was the joint death of the loving couple, and this was called shinju, literally, "whole-hearted fidelity". These tragedies, sacrifices to the conventional morality of the age, furnished much material for the novels and drama of the Genroku era and the following centuries. The sentimental reaction of literature of this kind was naturally great and extensive. Readers and spectators, young and old, and even those who were acting the role of the oppressors in actual life, shed profuse tears of sympathy with the unfortunate lovers and applauded their fidelity. The sufferers sacrificed themselves in silence, while those who had passed that stage often became oppressors themselves, the cruelty

of mothers-in-law towards daughters-in-law becoming proverbial.*

The wife of the Samurai was influenced by Bushido quite as much as her husband. She was taught from earliest childhood to be self-effacing and to hide all traces of suffering or grief. She was also taught how to end her life with dignity in case the occasion demanded it. By her example she exerted a profound influence over her husband. Honor was highly esteemed. It was dearer than her life. Disgrace and defeat were wiped out by suicide. Protest against injustice was also made by suicide. If the husband was condemned to death, it was held a privilege that he be allowed to kill himself, and the wife would often join him in his death-act. Children of both sexes were trained to perform suicide, if necessary, to defend their personal honor.

Men committed suicide by hara kiri, literally translated "slashing of the belly". Women did not commit hara kiri but jigai, piercing the throat with a dagger so as to sever the arteries with a single thrust. Women resorted often to this method as a means of preserving honor in time of war. Samurai maidens, bound in loyalty to their mistresses, were often led to suicide by jealousies and intrigues. Often a bereaved wife committed suicide hoping to follow her husband into the other world. Even, at times, when the husband was guilty of some disgraceful behaviour and refused to listen to the wife's advice or reproof, it became a moral obligation upon her to take her life as a protest, hoping that her sacrifice would recall the husband to his senses. This

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Anesaki, Masaharu, History of Japanese Religion, p.285

ideal of wifely duty has survived through the years.

Instances of female suicide representing the old ideal of duty to a dead husband have occurred numberless times. At the time of the war with China, Lafcadio Hearn tells of a remarkable suicide of this kind which occurred in Tokyo. Lieutenant Asada was killed in battle. Mrs. Asada was only twenty-one but, hearing of her husband's death, she prepared to take her own life. She carefully cleaned her house, wrote letters of farewell and thanks to her relatives and friends, put on her death robe (which a woman of Japan always has ready), placed her husband's portrait in the tokonoma alcove, and set offerings before it. Then she seated herself upon a pillow before the portrait and, with her dagger, committed jigai.

Another incident of this kind which is treasured by the Japanese is that of the suicide of the wife of Ishijima. Ishijima was a rich voter in the Nagano prefecture. In the fall elections of 1892, he publicly pledged himself to support a certain candidate. For some reason or other, he transferred his support to the rival candidate. The citizens of his town were very angry at him, and his wife, upon learning of his breach of promise, performed jigai in the old samurai manner. The people of this district still decorate her grave with flowers and burn incense before her tomb.

In the Japan Advertiser, October 5th, 1937, appeared the following paragraph:

Mrs. Umeko Sato, widow of Captain Kazue Sato, who

was killed in action during an engagement at Paoting, north China, committed suicide by drowning on Sunday evening. Her body was found by a fishing boat yesterday morning. She went to a certain hot-spring resort shortly before noon on Sunday. About five-thirty in the afternoon she went out saying that she intended to take a short walk. When she did not return, the keeper of the inn was alarmed and sent for the police. It is believed that she died because of love for her husband. Her courageous action as the wife of an officer is greatly admired. When her husband left for the front, she said to a neighbor, "My married life will end with Captain Sato's departure for China".

Griffis writes:

The three fundamental duties of woman which include all others and are laid down in the Chinese Classics are almost universally fulfilled without murmuring or hesitation in Japan. These duties are first, obedience to her father when a child; second, obedience to her husband when a wife; third, obedience to her eldest son when a widow. Indeed, the whole sum of excellencies and defects of the Japanese female character arise from one all-including virtue, and the biography of a good woman is written in one word, obedience.*

For this life of obedience, through the centuries, the Japanese woman may thank Confucianism.

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Griffis, W.E., The Mikado's Empire, p.559

THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM ON JAPANESE WOMEN

Dr. Daisetz Suzuki in a lecture before the Culture Society in Tokyo, October 29, 1936, said:

To know the effect of Buddhism in Japan wipe out all the Buddhist temples with their treasures, libraries, gardens, anecdotes, tales and romances and see what is left in the history of Japan; no painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama, no minor branches of art, landscape gardening, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, fencing, no industrial arts. The origin of education is traceable to colleges established in Horyuji and Kofukuji. General education was designed by Kobo Daishi in 828 A.D. Social service, the bath-house, hospital, herb-hunting, botanical gardens owe first activities to early Buddhism from the 7th century on. It was due to the initiation of Buddhist monks who travelled to propagate their faith that mountains were first climbed, rivers bridged, roads built, fields tilled, wells dug, hot-springs discovered, trees planted, canals opened, the alphabet conceived.

From the middle of the 14th to the end of the 16th century the Zen monks and their institutions were the custodians of Japanese learning, secular and religious. When the statesmen or generals of those days wanted to have any form of literary communication with Chinese and Koreans, they were obliged to go to the Zen monks. The monks even manned the trading ships and were engaged in bringing Chinese money and goods to Japan.

Surely the effect of Buddhism on the life and thought of Japanese men and women all through the ages has been incalculable. Griffis says, "Broadly speaking the history of Japanese Buddhism in its missionary development is the history of Japan. Before Buddhism came, Japan was prehistoric. Buddhism was the teacher under whose instruction the Japanese nation grew up."

Dr. Suzuki is convincing and eloquent as he lists the things for which Japan must give credit to Buddhism. Yet he has nothing to say about any special benefits to women in his list. It would be indeed interesting to have him with his superior knowledge of Buddhism outline what Buddhism has done for Japanese women, but he does not mention women in his article, nor does his wife, Beatrice Lane Suzuki, in an article, "Problems of Present Day Buddhism", which was published in the Japan Christian Year Book for 1936. Perhaps the most significant fact of all is that women are never mentioned or considered by Buddhism, either in its tenets or in the records of its followers.

Dr. Sydney Gulick in his "Evolution of the Japanese" says:

One of the most striking differences between the moral ideals of the East and the West is the low estimate put upon the inherent value and nature of women by which was determined her social position and the moral relationship of the sexes. There seems to be considerable unanimity among historians that in primitive times in Japan there prevailed a much larger liberty, and consequently a much higher regard for woman than in later times after Buddhism became powerful. With regard to that earlier period, over a thousand years ago, it is of little use to speculate. I cannot escape the feeling that the condition of women at that time has been unconsciously idealized in order to make a better showing in comparison with customs in Western lands. Be that as it may, the notions and ideals presented by Buddhism in regard to woman are clear and clearly degrading. She is the source of temptation and sin; she is essentially inferior to man in every respect. Before she may hope to enter Nirvana she must be born again.*

Dr. Griffis gives his opinion of what Buddhism has done for women in the following words:

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Gulick, Sydney, Evolution of the Japanese, p.258

In its attitude toward women which is, perhaps, one of the crucial tests of a religion as well as of a civilization, Buddhism has somewhat to be praised and much to be blamed for. It is probable that the Japanese woman owes more to Buddhism than to Confucianism, though relatively her position was highest under Shinto. In Japan the women are the freest in all Asia, and probably the best treated among any Asiatic nation, but this is not because of Gautama's teaching. In the Saddharma Pundarika (Kern's translation, p.252), we find this paragraph:

Then the venerable Sariputra said to that daughter of Sagara, the Naya-King; "Thou hast conceived the idea of enlightenment, young lady of good family, without sliding back and art gifted with immense wisdom but supreme perfect enlightenment is not easily won. It may happen, sister, that a woman displays an unflagging energy, performs good deeds for many thousands of aeons and fulfills the six perfect virtues but as yet there is no example of her having reached Buddhahip and that because a woman cannot occupy the five ranks of 1. Brahma, 2. Indra, 3. Chief Guardian of the Four Quarters, 4. Kakravartin, 5. Rank of Bodhisattva (incapable of sliding back)."*

Very early in its history Japanese Buddhism welcomed women into its fraternity and order. Chiu-jo-hime was the first Japanese nun and the only woman who is commemorated by an image. She extracted the fibers of the lotus root and wove them with silk to make tapestries for the altars. The practise of giving rank to women was commenced in the reign of Jito Tenno, reigning Empress, 690-705 A.D. Many women shaved their heads and became nuns when they lost their husbands as well as on being forsaken by them. Orphans often became nuns also. The Japanese nun never became a Sister of Mercy or reached even within a measurable distance the dignity of the Christian woman in the nunnery. In European history the Abbess was a notable figure, while the

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Griffis, W.E., The Religions of Japan, p.318

Japanese Abbess is hardly heard of beyond the Japanese nunnery, except occasionally in fiction. The religion founded by one who deserted wife and child did nothing to check concubinage or polygamy. It simply allowed these things or ameliorated their ancient barbaric conditions through the law of kindness. Nevertheless, it brought education and culture within the family as well as within the Court. Certainly the animating spirit of most of the popular literature is due to Buddhist culture and this was almost all the creation of women.

Buddhism like Roman Catholicism and as compared to Confucianism, which is Protestant and masculine, is feminine in its type. In Japan the place of the Holy Virgin Mary is taken by Kwannon, the Goddess of Mercy, and her shrine is one of the most popular of all. Another goddess is Benten, the Queen of the Heavens and Mistress of the Seas. The angels of Buddhism are always feminine, and as in inscriptions and pagan conceptions of Christian angels, have wings. So, also, in the legends of Guatama in the Buddhist lives of the saints and in legendary lore as well as in pictorial art the female being transfigured in loveliness is a striking figure. Nevertheless, after all is summed up that can be said in favor of Buddhism, the position it accords to woman is not only immeasurably beneath that given by Christianity but is below that conceded by Shinto which knows not only goddesses and heroines, but also priestesses and Empresses. Jealousy is always represented by a female demon. Almost all temptors, devils and transformations of humanity into malignant beings, whether pretas, asuras, oni, foxes, badgers, or cats are female. As the Chinese ideograph associates all things weak or vile with woman so the telltale words of Japanese daily speech are but reflections of the dogmas coined in the Buddhist mint. The position of woman today despite that eagerness once shown to educate her is still relatively one of degradation as compared to that of her sister in Christendom. For this the mid-Asian religion is not wholly responsible, yet it is largely so.*

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Griffis, W.E., Op. cit., p.319

There is, however, one sect of Buddhism which gives a believing woman hope that she may attain the goal of the Buddhist faith at the close of her life; that is, she may lose her sex as a female and reappear as a Bodhisattvah of the male sex. The followers of this sect are called the Protestants of Japanese Buddhism. This is known as the Shin Sect or The True Sect of the Pure Land. It sprang out of the Jodo or Pure Law Sect. Some call it the Methodism of Buddhism. One of its principal teachings is that morality is of equal importance with faith and another is the teaching of true spiritual democracy, even of women. Robert Cornell Armstrong, while he gives very few facts about women, in his book, "Buddhism and Buddhists in Japan", does have the following helpful paragraph on the attitude toward women in Shin Buddhism:

A Shingon writer says that women are made up of the same elements as man and are equally open to salvation. Priests of the True Sect of Pure Land, arising above Amida's 34th vow, declare that the mercy of Amida is great enough to save women. These progressive ideas which have recently developed in Japanese Buddhism spring largely from contact with modern civilization and competition with Christianity. All movements of Buddhism recognize clearly the need of radical reform; the movement for reform is especially strong among the followers of the Pure Land Sect. The leaders exalt the teachings of Shinran and urge Buddhists to renounce errors.*

In order to realize the place given to women in this Sect it is necessary to study the life of the founder, Shinran Shonin. He was born at the close of the twelfth century and entered temple service as a boy. In his young manhood he was noted both

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Armstrong, Robert Cornell, Buddhism and Buddhists in Japan, p.75

for his scholarship and interesting personality. The Emperor, realizing this, showered presents upon him. Shinran was pleased when so honored but was reminded of a Buddhist saint, who, after a similar experience, was reprimanded by his mother for his joy over earthly honors. Finally, he retired from the world and sought peace by prayer; but three weeks of prostration brought no peace. For a hundred days in succession he spent the night before the Goddess of Mercy. On the last night the goddess appeared to him in a trance, saying, "The important way of salvation in this lost world is the repetition of Amida's name. Go to Honen Shonin; he will save you from the sea of suffering." So Shinran went to Honen and opened up his soul. Honen said, "You have been trying to save yourself; have faith in Amida, the Lord of Excellent Life and Light." Suddenly he found peace.

Dr. Armstrong says that Honen's principle made it possible to wipe out the distinction not only between monk and layman, but also between man and woman. The mercy of Amida was so great that even wifehood and the responsibilities of a home were no hindrance to a religious life. It was mistake to think that every man must retire from the world in order to obtain salvation. Tradition says that Kanezane Fujiwara, a leading government official, urged Honen to carry his teaching to a logical conclusion by choosing his best disciple to become the husband of his own daughter. Shinran, having been prepared in a dream in which the Goddess of Mercy promised to become his wife, agreed to marry the lady and establish a home. Tradition has woven a

circle of romance about this event. The following story represents the problem which this marriage raised with many Buddhists of that day.

One day when Shinran was returning to Mt. Hiei, the central sanctuary of the Tendai Sect, he met a young lady who said to him, "I wish to go to the top of this sacred mountain to worship. Please guide me." Shinran was greatly surprised at this request and said, "But you are a woman." She was prepared for this rebuff, for, until quite modern times, no woman's foot had been allowed to tread the sacred mountains of Japan. Mountain guides still point out the barriers past which women are not allowed to go. At the foot of Mt. Takeyama they show to visitors the place where a woman attempted to go beyond the barrier and was turned to stone and the place where another woman was turned into a peculiarly shaped pine tree.

The woman who met Shinran said, "Although I am a woman I have a human heart, and my human heart longs for salvation. Is there no peace or joy for me?" Shinran replied, "You have the nunneries. Go to one of them." But she objected, saying, "The nunneries, like your monasteries, are places where people delve into ancient lore. I want a simple faith for simple people that all my sisters in Japan may enjoy the blessings of salvation." She then took from her bosom a crystal lens and handed it to Shinran, saying:

This jewel has the property of focusing light in one place until it burns intensely. Take it and use it as a symbol of what you are to do for religion. Concentrate your message upon some

simple statement of faith for simple people that their hearts may burn with its convincing saving power.

The woman then struck her breast three times, cursed Buddha, and disappeared as mysteriously as she had come. Shinran turned thoughtfully up the mountain, muttering to himself, "Truly, if a religion will not save the ignorant and the women, it is a lie."

Shinran made faith the basis of the simple means of salvation. By faith alone men are saved, and perhaps for the first time in Buddhist history, the word "men" included women. They too might be saved by means of faith. This faith brought great changes in practise to the believers of the Pure Land Sect. Shinran was said to have married the woman who spoke to him that memorable day on Mt. Hiei. Thus, in a concrete way, he demonstrated that the doctrine of salvation by faith could save a married priest as well as a layman. When he was banished to a distant place on account of his innovations, he and his wife went out among the peasantry and cheered their hearts by this simple gospel. The priests of Shinran Sect still marry.

The other sects of Buddhism say that "Woman is the messenger of Hell." Even one who speaks with her is defiled, and he who cohabits with her can scarcely hope for purification. Existence is an evil and everything pertaining to it is evil. Home life is an evil to be evaded. When this late Sect of Shinran began to tolerate the home and marriage, they practically admitted that the Buddhist view of life is false.

Dr. Armstrong says further:

In none of its ideals has Buddhism changed so much as in its attitudes toward women. An ancient writer reflects the typical Buddhist conception when he describes a mother nursing her child as one of the saddest possible sights; this was the conception of woman as the instrument of introducing man into the sea of birth and death. One ancient priest called her the messenger of Hell. One scripture not only condemned woman but also the man who lives with her. Even the best scripture taught that no woman can enter Paradise. Amida's vows could save woman only on condition that she despises her womanly nature and is born again as a man. Modern Buddhists find it necessary to try to explain away all such passages and teachings, and they are making a real place for women in their organizations. One Tokyo temple has issued a pamphlet of rules for Buddhist ladies' societies. In the preamble it describes the aim of one of these organizations to be "how to make clear how women may become good women and good housewives". This society is not so religious as a similar Christian organization would be; it attempts, rather, to teach household economy, hygiene and sanitation. Its avowed object is "to exalt the virtue of women and give them knowledge and training in some arts necessary to life". A certain woman wrote to a Buddhist magazine expressing her desire to cut off her hair and devote her life to contemplation and asked for instructions. The editor replied that it was not necessary to shave the head. He said, "As a woman, by adapting yourself to your environment and observing the common duties, the foundation for contemplation is laid. However, for one fleeing from the world, the devil of worry will be found in the way, and it will be necessary to fight and drive him away." This same magazine came out clearly and strongly against concubinage.*

Dr. Charlotte De Forest in her discussion of Buddhism in her book, "Woman and the Leaven", brings us up a little closer to present day Buddhism in Japan. She says that there are over ten thousand Japanese nuns and priestesses who are devoting their

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Armstrong, Robert Cornell, Op. cit., p.75

lives to the formal service of Buddhism or Shintoism in some established Sect. This does not include the miko, little girls who perform the sacred dance at the Shinto shrines. Buddhist nuns are often educated from childhood in the temple and then are initiated at a suitable age into the full status of nuns. Some are Imperial Princesses for whom there is no husband of suitable rank. Their families recognize this situation and decide on a religious career for them early in their lives. Some are mature women whose disappointments have led them to renounce the world.

Dr. DeForest tells of a nun whom she knows who secretly left her temple and came to a missionary home asking to be taught Christianity. She had lost her husband, her two children and a sister-in-law by death. She retired to the temple to pray for the salvation and happiness of her loved ones who had gone before. The insincerity and disappointing life of the priests and a sense that Buddhism was not keeping up with the needs of the people made her face herself honestly and, doing so, she was compelled to renounce Buddhism. She became an earnest Christian, earning her living as a seamstress while she studied to become a graduate nurse.

Another story is of a nun who had become an abbess and was very popular as a Buddhist lecturer. A missionary friend whom she had known in her girlhood visited her and saw her seated high on golden cushions receiving homage from many worshippers. The abbess, as soon as she saw her old friend, left her honorable seat and threw herself before her former Christian teacher and

confessed that she was teaching Christian truths in her lectures under a Buddhist guise. The people were astonished at her strange teaching, but they thought that she had travelled abroad and had received some amazing new world knowledge. When in Girls' High School, she had broken down with tuberculosis, and her aunt had taken her to the temple, where she had recovered. She remained in the temple to help her aunt and when the abbess died, she succeeded her and began to lecture throughout the province teaching Christian principles more often than Buddhist. Missionaries who have lived in the country districts tell many stories similar to these.

In accordance with the modern movement to organize, Buddhist women have formed themselves into societies. The largest and oldest of such societies is that connected with the Otani branch of Buddhism. This society, numbering a quarter of a million members, has two main aims, character culture, in accordance with Buddhist teachings, and social service. It conducts an employment bureau, aids poor girls to get an education and publishes a magazine called "Woman's Virtue". Another wellknown society was founded by the famous abbess, Murakumo, after the Russian War. Its members teach religious culture and engage in relief work and also aid families of deceased and disabled soldiers.

The director of the Buddhist Mission in Hawaii a few years ago taught that modern Buddhism presents the truest and purest idea of democracy. His three arguments were these:

- 1-The teachings of Buddhism are based on the law

of causation which prevails in nature and spirit alike. Every sentient being is responsible for his thoughts and deeds. This idea of responsibility produces a sense of justice and a feeling of sympathy for all beings who stand together on a basis of equality because they are all moral beings.

2-Buddhism recognizes only one principle which unifies all things, refusing to admit such distinctions as matter and consciousness, body and mind, I and you, God and man, Creator and creatures. All human sufferings arise from "I" and "not I". Universal essence or Buddha nature extends to plants and things, all of which have the possibility of Buddhahood.

3-From the standpoint of the True Sect of Pure Land all people are the children of Amida's mercy and are brothers, friends and comrades in faith. Even Shinran, founder of the Sect, called his disciples comrades and recorded all beings as his parents and blood relations, and his wife as the incarnation of a holy being worthy of respect and love. This made the home, which is the base of society and the source of all sound morality, the center of his religious life. Love is infinite, faith is absolute, and this is where all sentient beings meet on a basis of equality.

These principles as expressed by the priest in Hawaii are a fair sample of what the most modern and enlightened Buddhist priests of Japan are now teaching. The attitude toward women and her position in society and in religion are not often mentioned and certainly never stressed; but it is quite possible to see from the above statements that attitudes are changing and that so far as theory goes woman may now, even in Buddhism, claim a hope of salvation and a place in a religion teaching unity and democracy. These ideas are so new among Buddhists, however, that they have as yet affected women and children very little.

Baroness Ishimoto in her autobiography gives her opinion as

to what Buddhism lacks in meeting the needs of a woman like herself. In her great trouble she turned to Buddhism, hoping that it would give her strength to meet the problems of her life. She went deeply into the study of the principles of the Zen Sect, but she found that Buddhist teachers have had very little to say about the problems of the practical world. It may be well to quote at length from her experience. It is very unusual for a Japanese woman to write or speak of her own religious experiences. The following paragraphs give a vivid picture of what the various sects meant to her when she greatly needed help:

It is natural for a suffering soul to seek solace in religion. If Buddha would but open his benign arms I felt that I could throw myself upon his infinitely wide and deep bosom and find peace. My heart was being starved by lack of nourishment. In the hope that it might develop harmoniously with my reason, giving new strength for life, I drew nearer to Buddhism. The policy of the Tokugawa shogunate forced every Japanese family to be registered in one or other of the sects of Buddhism. Thus Buddhism entrenched itself in the family system. It remains the pivot of our social system. The Buddhist religion has thus been taken for granted and has evoked very little critical thinking about the soul. Religious rites have been performed punctiliously--not intellectually. Under the influence of Buddhism for centuries most of our daily habits and even our racial traits have been molded. Tenacity is not a striking characteristic of the Japanese people, and its absence I attribute to Buddhism which has taught us fatalism. The fatalistic view maintains that our present life is the karma of a previous existence and that the same law of causality will operate for continuous reincarnation, the nature of which will depend on what we do or desire for ourselves now. The concept behind our endeavor to build fine habits and conduct ourselves well is happiness in the next world--not the betterment of the present world. A certain kind of behaviour may lead us to

reincarnate as cats; another, as monkeys; the dogs at our feet may have been Princes or even kings who did not act in ways conducive to a human existence. Fatalism holds that the parent and child relation is limited to this world only, while the husband and wife relation continues to the next world, which will be a shock to some people.

Buddhist teachers have had very little to say about the problems of the practical world. They do not touch individual life and thought in that relation. They betray no positive understanding of love between man and woman by insisting that it is as hard for the woman to become a Buddha as it is for a rich man to enter the Christian heaven.

Recently there has arisen new Buddhist movements imitating the propagandistic measures of Christian enterprises sending missionaries and social workers all over the world on the tide of the Pan-Asiatic movement. This new Japanese Buddhism reveals innovations in doctrine, such as the righteousness of equality of sex. It is building its temples in modern style architecture with Otis elevators to carry the bronze images of Buddha. Its leaders preside over Pan-Pacific Buddhist conferences. It has the semblance of an attempt to introduce Americanism into Buddhism by destroying the ancient charm of quietness common to all Oriental religions and introducing the nervous rush and uproar more characteristic of Occidental faiths.

Religious lethargy has been more and more noticeable among the Japanese during recent decades. There are those who see no inconsistency in marrying and vowing loyalty to the spirit of General Nogi at the Nogi Shrine in Tokyo--formerly the residence of the heroic General and now a popular place for wedding ceremonies--and burying their dead according to the Buddhist sutra, chanting and burning incense. But the conquest of spiritual matters by the almighty force of modern science has created a new trend of thought among the intellectual Japanese away from any sort of traditional religious formality. This may be illustrated in the will of my uncle who ordered that his funeral ceremony be performed in an airplane entirely apart from

sutras and incense vapors. His body was to be cremated in a modern manner and his ashes to be scattered in the air from the plane. His widow and sons were willing to carry out the funeral according to the will; but the police objected, saying that there was no precedent and that it would bring confusion in police regulations if many people began to follow this strange fashion, so my uncle's will was not fully executed, but the body containing his ashes was carried into the sky on an airplane and was tossed overboard to land at the center of the schoolground amid the cheers of his students. His wife sorrowfully complains that she has no temple or graveyard to which she can take flowers, but she is released from the trouble of repeating the complicated anniversary memorial services for the dead.

There are many aspects of Buddhism with which I am not sympathetic, but it has an appeal for me just as one loves to keep an old and cherished habit, even though it may be a useless one.

My search for a satisfying temple took some time. I love the old Zen Sect temple in whose graveyard the ashes of my ancestors lie peacefully under the ancient trees. Its priests are impressive at funerals or Bon festivals, but they failed to convince me that they were my spiritual guides. My mother's family temple, to which I occasionally go, is tended by young and old nuns clad in black robes and bonnets that impart charm and grace to their small shaved heads, but they look too delicately simple for me to put before them such a problem as the salvation of one's soul.

As a member of the Ishimoto family I am supposed to belong to a temple of the Pure Land Sect, but I have regarded that temple and its priests as a part, merely, of family business affairs, requiring our regular contributions at the middle and end of each year and on occasions such as the anniversaries of our departed relatives. Beyond that business relation I have had nothing to do with the clergy of the temple. The head priest is a modest middle-aged gentleman. At the seventh day ceremony of my late mother-in-law he offered to Buddha a big round tub of living roaches

wriggling and twisting their small snake-like bodies in the water. While he chanted the sutras, he scattered white and pink artificial lotus petals all over the temple hall. The offering of living roaches meant that, after the ceremony was over, when the living creatures were turned loose in a river human mercy toward every living thing, such as birds, fish and even insects would be demonstrated; that Buddha would be pleased; and that the salvation of the newly departed spirit would be assured.

The Pure Land Sect to which my husband's family belongs is unlike my own family's Zen Sect. While a rigorous practice of stoicism is preserved in the latter, the former is very worldly. Honen Shonin, the founder of the Pure Land cult, recognized the human nature of the priesthood, permitting them to marry and to eat meat and fish; whereas in the Zen temples no women, no meat, and in some of them no alcohol even, is allowed. I love the clean atmosphere of a Zen temple where the great priests are really men of high culture and profound scholastic attainments; in the Pure Land Sect, on the contrary, the priesthood is usually an inherited family profession, and I have often seen baby clothes hanging in rows behind its temple and young and old women chattering in the priests' residential quarter behind the altar room.

There is no assertion of subtle individual faith in any of the Japanese religions. A Japanese woman born in a family which belongs to the Zen Sect and married to a family belonging to the Pure Land Sect has naturally to follow her husband's family religion, never thinking faith a personal issue. There is no such complication for her as in the case of a Catholic girl married to a Protestant man.

Faith which means complete trust in either Buddha or God and renunciation of self-help may be fascinating to religious minded persons, but it is difficult for the logical minded. The way of salvation shall be given even to the ignorant or the sinful, if they merely repeat "Namu Amida-butsu". This is naturally an attractive gospel and there are, it is said, more than 26,000,000 Japanese chanting "Namu Amida..." almost instinctively. The Pure Land Sect is one of the six

largest among more than a dozen Japanese Buddhist Sects now in existence. It has nearly 30,000 temples and 50,000 professional clergymen. It is the greatest religious force in Japanese society today. If not keenly logical myself, I aspired to find a logical faith. My quest continued.*

Baroness Ishimoto, not finding help in this sect, which she entered at the time of her marriage, turned back to the Zen teachings which her father's family had followed. After studying Zen and practising the Za-zen method of obtaining spiritual power by controlling physiological movement, an organic feeling of a balanced relationship between mind and body, and practising meditation for hours upon hours attempting to put the mind in a vacant condition, she felt that she did not accomplish very much. She found herself not contented with Zen and "detected a peculiar brusquerie and cynicism in most of the Zen practitioners which may be the result of denying the reality of the world too much and playing to excess with abstractions, for one cannot live wholly out of society." Baroness Ishimoto says:

Though I did not go far in Zen philosophy, I gained a certain mental strength with which to overcome my restlessness and the ill state of my nerves caused by leading an active life like many people of the present age, a life of rush and struggle in the midst of various anxieties. A certain serenity of mind I have since acquired, and I must attribute a great deal of it to the teachings and meditations in the Zen temple. I grew, however, to believe that Zenism is a sort of cowardly attitude to life whose solid realities it purposely overlooks. I observe most of the people who are absorbed in this religion toying with mere metaphysical arguments, cynically and lazily pretending to be indifferent to contemporary social problems. I could not find one bit of happiness for myself if the ultimate happiness of mankind were out of the

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Baroness Ishimoto, Shidzue, Facing Two Ways, p.323

picture, and this excluded me from strict Zenism.*

Being dissatisfied with Zenism, this modern Japanese woman continued her search for religion and tells us that she found it in a more satisfying degree in the Nichiren Sect.

If Zen is the religion of solitude, an argument for nihilism, Nichiren is the religion of social righteousness requiring action under persecution and every difficulty. It is aggressive against social injustice. It is the only sect of Japanese Buddhism which declares the unfairness of ranking women below men. Nichiren's affection for his mother made him resent the point of view so generally held by Buddhists that womankind is sinful and unworthy of salvation. In opposition he declared; "Man is pillar and woman is frame; man is wing and woman is body; if the wing is separated from the body, how can it fly?" My interest in Nichiren is not in its doctrines as a cult but in Nichiren himself. It has to do with his spiritual strength and the courage which never failed him, even when faced with the threat of death. He never worried about his food; nor was he ever afraid to die for the sake of his faith. The man, Nichiren, who with steadfast faith and conviction always pushed ahead in the promotion of his cause, moved me the most of all religious forces. Inspired by the spiritual power of Nichiren I reached a wonderful calmness of mind, never to be disturbed again by uncertainty, grief, anger or momentary pleasure. My enlightenment came when I saw something which I cannot explain by a logical process--when I responded to the life of Nichiren. This attainment, Satori, may be defined as an intuitive looking into the nature of things, in contradistinction to the intellectual and logical understanding of life. The teachers explain the process as the unfolding of a new world hitherto unperceived in the confusion of a dualistic mind. Or we may say that with Satori our entire surroundings are viewed from quite an unexpected angle of perception. In the midst of financial problems I could now take a deep breath as if under the shining spring sun.

The teachers explain that whatever the Satori is, the world for those who have gained a Satori is no more the world as it used to be; even with all

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Baroness Ishimoto, Shidzue, Op. cit., p.323

its flowing streams and burning fires it is never again the same. Satori is a revolution-- a revaluation of the spiritual aspect of one's existence. This change of mind came to me, not through my hard practice of Za-zen meditation but as the balance sheet or gross sum of my years' hard thinking and labor and the various experiences of my early life. Indeed it is a pagoda to celebrate my triumph over my serious mental conflicts. Hereafter I shall be able to carry my message forward with never-defeat-able courage and conviction though the road be a thorn.*

It is only fair to take special note of an experience of this sort, realizing that a woman intellectually keen, highly educated, travelled and experienced in life's tragic struggles may, by study and sacrificial, mental and spiritual practises, work out a sort of peaceful salvation which brings strength and courage for everyday life. However, there are few women in Japan able to sift the teachings of the various sects of Buddhism and from the findings work out an individual faith. Baroness Ishimoto, herself, says, "There is no assertion of subtle individual faith in any of the Japanese religions."

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Baroness Ishimoto, Shidzue, Op. cit., p.323

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON JAPANESE WOMEN

Introduction of Christianity into Japan

The way in which Christianity came to Japan forms one of the most interesting chapters in her whole history. Many authorities believe that Christopher Columbus was really searching for the "kingdom of the sun-source" when he discovered America. When he landed, he is said to have eagerly inquired concerning Jipangu. Marco Polo, the venetian explorer, had spent seventeen years, 1275-1292, in Peking at the Court of the Tartar Emperor, Kublai Khan, and he had heard of a land lying to the east of China called Jipangu. Columbus was an ardent student of the book on the Orient written by Marco Polo which had been published in 1298 A.D. A desire for adventure and discovery was started in Portugal by Columbus, and a host of Portuguese navigators pushed out into unknown seas and brought back such glorious tales of gold and spices that the greed of monarchs was awakened, and many of them were inspired to found empires in Asia. Tales of the uncivilized masses also fired the religious-minded folk to send the Gospel to these heathen.

The Spaniards had founded an Empire in America, and now the Portuguese were desirous of founding an Empire in Asia. Mendez Pinto was the first Portuguese to land in Japan. Pinto was in China with a cargo of goods and before returning home, in a spirit of adventure, he thought he would join a group of Chinese pirates and see how they conducted their business. Their boat was

attacked by another lot of pirates, and the pilot was killed. They drifted out to sea and floated aimlessly about for over three weeks when, by chance, they landed on an island off the south end of Kyushu, the isle of Tane. Japanese history records that this is the time when fire arms were introduced into Japan. Pinto and his two companions had "arquebuses" which made a great impression on the natives. Pinto was invited to visit the Daimyo of Bungo, and there he taught them about the Christian God and how to make guns and gunpowder. In a few years firearms came into quite general use in Japan. This was in 1542, nearly fifty years after Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Pinto was the first European to set foot on the Sunrise Kingdom. In the minds of the Japanese for centuries, the "three terrors", foreigners, Christianity and firearms, were synonymous. In those early days, in Europe as well as in Asia, commerce and religion were closely connected and played into each other's hands.

It is recorded that Pinto made 1200 percent on his first cargo to Japan and took back many presents. From this time, hundreds of Portuguese adventurers came to Japan with their cargoes. The Daimyos, too, were soon fired with the same zeal to take advantage of trade and to get firearms, and so the foreign traders were welcomed warmly.

This happened to be the very period in Japanese history when the Ashikaga Shoguns were fighting for supremacy. To have these new instruments of warfare would insure any group of victory.

Anjiro from Satsuma Province, became especially friendly

with these traders, and he, having killed a man, fled to Pinto's boat and begged to be hid. Pinto took him back to China and, suffering from his crime, he sought comfort in the religion of the foreign priests. He learned to read and write, was soundly converted and became Xavier's interpreter. Xavier was one of the great missionary heroes of the Roman Church. Anjiro told him about Japan, and Xavier asked him if he thought the Japanese people would accept Christian teachings. Anjiro's answer is recorded in Xavier's diary: "His people would not immediately assent to what might be said to them, but they would investigate what I might affirm respecting religion by a multitude of questions, and, above all, by observing whether my conduct agreed with my words. This done, the King, the nobility, and adult population would flock to Christ, being a nation which always followed reason as a guide."

It was in 1549 that Anjiro, who had taken the name, "Paul of the Holy Faith", brought Xavier and two of his co-workers, Father Torres and a layman, Juan Fernandez, to his old home in Kagoshima. The Portuguese spent the first few weeks in language-study and prayer. Brother Juan began to preach very soon to the high class families in Satsuma, and Anjiro's family were among the first converts. They all, however, felt anxious to get in touch with the Shogun in the capitol city, so they took presents from the King of Portugal and went to Kyoto. There they were well received by the Shogun, who gave them a Buddhist monastery to live in. They all preached the Gospel with signal success and

had many converts. Xavier, in his joy, wrote a hymn, in 1550, in Kyoto, which is still extant. Fortunately for the cause, just at this time a Portuguese boat came to Japan. The captain came to Kyoto to pay his respects to the Shogun, and when he saw Xavier, he fell at his feet, as any good Catholic might do before a holy father. This impressed the Japanese very much. They felt that Xavier must be a truly great teacher, if his own people fell on their faces before him. He was henceforth given all privileges, and a document has recently been unearthed saying, "The Bonzes (monks) from the west are authorized to rebuild the Dai-do Ji Temple in order to preach the law of Buddha." Sealed and dated at Yamaguchi, 28th day of the 8th month, Tembun, 21st year (1551).

Three reigning Princes were converted with almost all their people. Both men and women joined the groups of Christians. Nobunaga, the prime minister, was favorable to the new sect, partly for political reasons, as he had been having much trouble with the militant Buddhist priests who had entrenched themselves in the monasteries above Kyoto and threatened the Central Government. Buddhism had become sensuous and weak, and the strong fighting men were glad to hear of a virile religion worthy of strong men's attention. Xavier's dignified appearance and southern European courtesy appealed to these men who, since the Heian Period, had held culture very high. Xavier himself stayed in Japan two years, then returned to China, where he died in 1552. Dr. Otis Cary says in his book on Christian Missions in Japan that, "No one deserves so much as Xavier to be called the founder

of the Japanese Church." In 1579, Father valiguavi from Rome was appointed visitor-General of the Eastern Missions of the Society of Jesus. Under his guidance four young men, two of them Princes and two noblemen, went to India and south Europe. They were received by Pope Gregory XIII. They visited the churches in Rome, Lisbon, Madrid, Venice, Florence and Pisa, and returned on fire for Christianity. They told their people that Christianity had brought civilization and prosperity to Europe. They became priests and preached throughout Japan, but they were greatly troubled by the change which had come over Nobunaga during their eight year's absence. He had begun to fear the Christians and to accuse the foreigners of using their religion to cover up the political ambitions of their sovereigns, who were thus sending spies into the country. Persecutions began about this time. Even the nobles were frightened at the rapid growth of Christian communities. Five years after Xavier visited Kyoto there were seven large churches in the vicinity of that city. In 1581 there were over two hundred churches and 150,000 native Christians. Nobunaga had planned to use the Christians as weapons against the revolutionary Buddhist priesthood, but now he realized his weapons were too strong for his own hands. When the Mission from south Europe returned, they had accompanying them seventeen Jesuit missionaries; Spanish friars, too, came from the Philippines with Dominicans and Augustans. The Dominicans were learned men and powerful preachers, and the Prince of Satsuma became so alarmed at their power that he ordered all missionaries from his

province. They moved to Nagasaki, taking their leper members, who pled with their Christian teachers not to leave them. The rapid growth of the Church continued until there were, according to missionary records, over 600,000 Christians in the land, while Japanese history records say that there were 2,000,000 nominal adherents. Many of the ladies of the noble households became Christians. Crosses and Christian shrines were as common as Buddhist symbols. Churches and chapels were built by the thousands.

Centuries of misrule and anarchy and civil war had reduced the people to poverty and misery, and the native religions offered them no comfort or hope. The priests of Rome came with crucifixes and rich robes and out-dazzled the Buddhist display, which at this time was about all that was left of their cult. The Romans preached entrance into Heaven immediately after death to all believers, which was a welcome doctrine to a people who had been taught that rest in Heaven came only after many trans-migrations of the soul, and that there would be eternities of miseries before salvation came. The story of the cross appealed to their starved hearts. The change from one religion to the other was easy. The Buddhist saints were easily changed into the twelve apostles, and the Cross took the place of the Torii, the Sacred Gate. The Goddess of Mercy, Kwannon, took the form of the Holy Mother, Mary. The temple bowl of holy water became the baptismal font. The rosary of the Buddhists worked equally well for Catholic beads of prayer. The Roman priests were furnished with much money for their work. Xavier collected \$15,000

in two and a half years for the Japan Mission, which was huge sum in those days. The Daimyos became Christians and ordered their subjects to join the faith or be banished. The Buddhist priests were driven from many districts. Many were killed and their temples burned. The Daimyo of Bungo at one time destroyed a magnificent temple with a colossal statue of Buddha and burned 3,000 monasteries. A Jesuit priest records this fire and vengeance as "An evident instance of his faith and charity".

The different Catholic orders now began to fight among themselves for exclusive rights in certain territories, and this gave place to proselytizing, indecent quarrelling at which "the pagans sneered, and the Buddhist priests rejoiced". By this time the English, Dutch and Spaniards were all sending trading vessels to Japan. Many of the foreigners were slave traders, filling their boats with thousands of Japanese slaves for the return trip, when they were sold in Macao, in China and the Philippines. Hideyoshi often threatened death to the slave dealers. The Catholic priests did try to stop this traffic, but were unable to do so. The discord and suspicion between the foreigners caused such a series of quarrels and even murders that such a state of affairs could not recommend itself to the authorities.

In 1587 Hideyoshi ordered the withdrawal of all foreign missionaries. The Jesuits closed their churches but preached in secret and averaged 10,000 converts a year till 1590. At this time a large group of Spanish Mendicant Friars came in from the Philippines. They openly defied the Shogun's orders, and in 1596 six

Franciscans, three Jesuits and several Japanese converts were crucified in Nagasaki. This started a bloody persecution. Hitherto the peasants had been passive and obedient, but now they, too, rose in armed rebellion. Iyeyasu, the next Shogun, met each rebellion with bloody resistance. Finally, in 1611, Iyeyasu had real proof, he thought, that the native converts and the foreigners had a plot to reduce Japan to a subject state. The chief conspirator, Okubo, governor of Sado, to which district thousands of exiled Christians had been sent to work in the mines, was to be made the ruler by the foreigners. Being frightened by this, the Shogun, in 1614, forced one hundred and seventeen Jesuits, twenty-two friars of other orders and hundreds of native priests into boats and sent them out of the country. In 1615 he called out his troops and fought Hideyori, an influential feudal lord who had been entertaining some Jesuit priests in the Osaka castle. A bloody battle ensued on June 9, 1615, when Hideyori and a hundred thousand men were killed and the castle burned. These events are all clearly recorded in the Roman "Historie de la Religion Chretienne".

These bloody encounters were the death-blow for Christianity in Japan. Hidetaka pronounced a sentence of death on any foreign priest found in the country. Fire and the sword destroyed all symbols of Christianity. Thousands of converts fled to Korea, Formosa and the Philippines. Hundreds of Christians were wrapped in straw and burned. Mothers carried their babies in their arms into the fire and water rather than leave them to be brought up

as pagans. There are records in English, Dutch, French, Latin and Japanese of the marvelous fortitude and bravery of these Christians. Griffis says that "The annals of the primitive church furnish no instances of sacrifice or heroic constancy in the Coliseum or the Roman arenas that were not paralleled on the dry river beds and execution grounds of Japan.

What it cost some of these Christians to hold to their faith is told in hundreds of stories handed down in family histories. As our special interest is in Japanese women, the story of the bravery of Lady Hosokawa is a splendid illustration of this courage.

Lady Hosokawa

Lady Hosokawa was the wife of Tadaoki Hosokawa, an influential adherent of the powerful feudal lord, Ieyasu Tokugawa, who rose to power in the later years of the sixteenth century and became Shogun in 1603 A.D. She was a woman of charm and greatly praised for her many virtues. Early in her married life her father assassinated Nobunaga, his liege lord, who was an outstanding figure in the political life of the times. Being a traitor's daughter, custom demanded that her husband divorce her, but his affection for her was great. Instead of divorcing her, he hid her in a mountain temple. There she spent her time reading books and cultivating her spiritual life. Some time passed, and then a change of regime opened the way for her to return home.

During this period of seclusion, her heart was turned to the Christian faith. Her husband, too, had been hearing much about

the new teaching from a Christian feudal lord, and he told her all that he had heard. She was so enthusiastic that she frightened her husband by her zeal, and when she urged that missionaries be invited to become their teachers, he made her a prisoner in her own home. Just at this time the fortunes of war called him to Kyushiu. During his absence, Lady Hosokawa stole out of the house, hunted up the missionaries and listened to their teachings as one famished for food.

One day while Lady Hosokawa was studying with the missionaries, her absence was discovered. There was consternation among the servants, as her husband had strictly charged his retainers not to allow her to leave the premises. Searching parties were sent to the temples and shrines. At last they found her at the Christian preaching place and forced her to return home.

A trusted maid-of-honor became a medium of communication between Lady Hosokawa and the Christian teachers. She went to the preaching services, listened to the sermons and repeated them to her mistress. One by one Lady Hosokawa led her servants and attendants to accept the Christian faith. When her husband returned, seventeen of these women had been baptised. She, herself, however, still a prisoner, had not received baptism.

About this time Hideyoshi, the feudal lord, issued an edict expelling all Christian teachers from Japan. Lady Hosokawa determined to be baptised at any cost before they left. Her plan was to enter a coffin, have it lowered from a window of her room at midnight and in that manner be taken to the church and

baptised. But the missionaries dissuaded her from carrying out her plan. Instead they taught Maria, one of the Christian maids, how to perform the ceremony and authorized her to baptise her mistress.

Shortly after this, Lord Hosokawa returned from the war, and became very angry when he heard what had happened. Seizing a dagger, he threatened her life, but she acted very heroically, unmoved by fear. He turned against the Christian maids and drove them from the house. From this time on Lady Hosokawa's courage and loyalty were so impressive that her husband was softened and finally gave her freedom to worship as she pleased. She dedicated her life to charity and worked amongst the poor and miserable. She was also a very earnest student and learned Portuguese and Latin from the books which were sent her by her missionary friends who had been exiled from Japan.

Lord Hosokawa was again involved in war, and in his absence his enemies ordered Lady Hosokawa and her children to enter the Castle as hostages for her husband's loyalty to the Shogunate. She had but two choices, captivity in the castle with disloyalty and dishonor involved, or suicide, the natural course for a Japanese woman in trouble. Suicide was impossible for her, as it was forbidden by Christian teaching. However, she determined to die rather than be disloyal to her husband and perhaps be forced to sell her own honor. So she drove a dagger into her throat and died in prayer. She forbade her servants to die with her, as was the national custom, saying, "God does not allow anyone to take his own life in order that he might accompany others into

the spirit world."

Lord Hosokawa was so touched by her loyalty and faith that he became a fast friend of the missionaries and gave much money to aid the cause. His mother became a Christian, also. His brother protected the Christians in his district, and Lord Hosokawa himself invited seven hundred persecuted Christians to live in his district, so that he might protect them.

Thus the seed of the Gospel was sown in blood and sacrifice. Seed sown in such soil always lives. For three hundred years these Christian families, through the generations, kept the Gospel story in their hearts, secretly worshipping, and passing on the teachings from father to son.

An instance of how Christian teaching was passed from family to family has recently come to light in a story told by a Presbyterian missionary, a woman, in the northern part of Japan. She organized an English night school for young men in a little Japanese church. One young fellow had attended school many months and had listened attentively to the Christian message given during the chapel hour. He longed to be baptized but was forbidden by his father, elderly and ill. One night the young man was summoned home from the school to find his father dying. The old man told the boy to kneel down, so that he could whisper to him a family secret which had brought prosperity and happiness to their family for generations. It had been whispered to him by his father when he died. It must never be told, or the charm would be lost. He must go every day to the temple and with bowed

head repeat it before the shrine. Then the old man reverently whispered in the boy's ear the Lord's Prayer, word for word, "Our Father who art in Heaven". The boy was greatly surprised and said, "Oh, father, that is the teaching which I have been studying." But the old man protested against this and tried to make the boy promise to keep this sacred message a secret. It had been passed on since the day of the persecutions. They had kept it fearfully, secreting it in their hearts long after Japan had declared freedom of worship.

In Osaka, a few years ago, a very old tenement district was torn down, and out of the walls and rafters statues of the Virgin Mary, crucifixes and Catholic symbols of all kinds, tumbled. The families had said their Buddhist prayers facing these walls, according to instructions of their ancestors, not knowing what was hidden there, nor the reason for their actions. The seed has lived in the hearts of the faithful, and wherever the Gospel is preached today in Japan, these seeds are uncovered, and the children of the martyrs receive the faith with the same zeal as their forefathers did. Their lives, too, indicate that they would meet fire and sword for their faith. Nowhere in the world have converts received the good news with more simplicity and implicit faith than in Japan.

Second Entrance of Christianity into Japan

Two hundred and sixty years passed before Commodore Perry and his black ships came to open Japan for world trade. The boards bearing edicts against Christianity could still be seen

on the highways. Mothers still whispered to their children the message sent to the outside world in the seventeenth century.

"As long as the sun shall continue to shine, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan, and let it be known that the Christian's God, or the Great God of All, if he dare violate this command, shall pay for it with his head." The edicts of persecution were not withdrawn until 1873, twenty years after Perry came. In 1709 an Italian priest had come from Manila and once again attempted to preach Christianity. But he was kept a prisoner until he died, leaving a red paper cross pasted on his wall, and having done nothing except to encourage an aged couple in an adjacent building to renew their faith. Dr. Brown, a Baptist missionary, found his grave in 1867, marked as for one buried in disgrace.

In 1848 some British naval officers stationed in the Liu Chiu Islands tried to form a naval mission to teach Christianity. The official date, however, of the beginning of Protestant missions is 1854, the year after Perry opened Japan to western influence. He was sent by the United States Congress to demand of the Japanese government a coaling station for the whalers of New England who had been pushing their whale fishing further and further north and were often wrecked on Japan's shores. By the Treaty of Kanagawa there was established "a perfect, permanent and universal peace and a sincere and cordial amity between the United States of America on the one part and the Empire of Japan on the other part, and between their peoples respectively without

exception of person or place." This gave a chance to the Protestant Church in America to send missionaries to Japan. Two clergymen arrived from the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1859 and were soon followed by Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Dutch reform teachers and preachers. Dr. Guido Verbeck, a Dutch minister educated in the United States, was one of the first missionaries and, being a very unusually able man and a trained educator, the Japanese government accepted him as an unofficial adviser for nine years. He had a great part in shaping the new educational system of the Meiji era which has so marvelously changed life in Japan, both for men and for women. Because of Verbeck's suggestions, a constant stream of young Japanese men and women have been sent to Europe and America to study. Verbeck, himself, went with the first group, just as the Jesuit missionaries had done 400 years before. Dr. Kenneth Saunders points out that the method for Christianizing Japan at this time was quite different from the old Catholic way.

Dr. Saunders writes:

The Jesuits were concerned with the glory of their Church, the conversion of young nobles to it and their consecration to the priesthood. What else could matter? To them, the Church and the Kingdom of God were synonymous. The Protestant missionaries chose rather to take part in a great secular movement for national education. They realized that modern knowledge was really the best friend of the Christian cause and that the Kingdom of God is broader than the Church.*

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Saunders, Kenneth, *Whither Asia*, p.125

The Influence of Christianity on Women

What has been the influence of Christianity on the women of Japan during the last eighty years? Miss Michi Kawai, one of the outstanding Christian leaders in Japan, has said that when she was sent to the Missionary Council in Jerusalem as a delegate, one of the things that made the greatest impression on her was the fact of the great difference in the comparative numbers of Christians in each country. One-fourth of the population of America and one out of every two in England, and ninety-eight out of every one hundred (including children) in the Scandenavian countries and Finland were recorded as Christians, while in her country there were barely three hundred thousand baptised Christians out of a total population of sixty-six million in Japan proper, not counting Korea. That made one Christian to every two hundred inhabitants. Added to this was the fact that the population was increasing by one million each year, and the small group of Christians was adding to its number only ten to fifteen thousand a year.

But this is a case where figures cannot be relied upon to paint a true picture. There are, perhaps, more Japanese who are Christian in heart than those whose names are on the church roll. Living across the street from the writer was a man who had been abroad, working in India for a number of years. He spoke English well and was a very progressive member of the staff of a well-known exporting company. One day, when walking down the street together, he asked me to explain a certain verse in the Bible to

him. After doing so, I remarked to him that I did not know that he was a Christian. He replied that he was not a Christian, but that he read his Bible every morning and tried to follow Christ's teachings. I asked him why he did not join the church and study with others who were interested as he was. He replied, "Perhaps I will in fifteen or twenty years. I am studying the religion and watching the lives of Christians. It isn't a small thing for me to decide. When I become a Christian, it is a family matter. I am the eldest son, and if I become a Christian, my whole family must follow me. We act as a family." It is easy to see what the attitude toward women would be in this group.

The family system and many old family and social customs make it particularly difficult for men and women to join the church. Often they study the Bible, pray and read Christian books, but do not ally themselves with other Christians. Thousands of students are without any religion, but, if pushed to make a choice, they would probably choose Christianity. Working in a government university for many years, we have found few who have not had some touch with Christianity in one form or another. Hundreds of families are sending their boys and girls to mission schools, and the children bring back to the homes ideals and customs that are unconsciously slipping into the family system.

The Japanese are very tolerant and willing and desirous of taking any good from any source. One who lives in Japan finds Christian influences in strange places. After spending a weekend in a temple on Mt. Koya, where stands the oldest monastery in

Japan, a group of Americans were given fans as parting gifts. They were surprised to find written on the fans, in artistic Chinese characters, the Beatitudes. Returning later to the temple, one of these teachers asked a priest how they happened to use words from the Bible on the fans. He answered, "Oh, they were very beautiful, and we wished our people to have them. Was it wrong to use them? Do they belong to you?"

Because this is still an early period in the life of the Christian Church in Japan--it has been but eighty-two years since the first Protestant missionary arrived--it is not easy to know surely what the influence of Christianity has truly been on women and children, but those who have lived in Japan intimately with the people are very sure of certain influences that have been very important and forceful in their lives.

Kagawa's Testimony

Dr. Kenneth Saunders of the Pacific School of Religion visited Japan and interviewed the famous Japanese Christian, Toyo-hiko Kagawa. He asked him, "What is the difference between Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity in Japan?" Kagawa answered, "Christianity has produced seven great changes in Japan."

1. Home life has changed. Concubinage is dying out. The long struggle against prostitution, and the effort for purity and life is a victory for Christianity. The divorce rate is decreasing. Children have been respected since Christianity came. Respect for women has grown astonishingly since Christianity came.
2. Respect for labor.

3. The democratic movement. Since Christianity came, the great achievement is the democratic movement--democracy in home life and in occupation.
4. Parliamentarism. The democratic movement was from the first led by Christians.
5. Respect for life. Prevention of suicides.
6. Respect for formerly despised occupations.
7. Philanthropy. The ethical teachings of Jesus are a glorious success in Japan. You cannot deny the Christian victory in Japan.*

Kagawa has given as the first and most important change that has come into Japan with Christianity, the new attitudes toward women and children. Miss Kawai says, "Christianity has influenced Japanese life like leaven in the lump, or like salt in the substance which it savors. The value of salt and leaven lies in the materials in which they work. And so it is with Christianity which influences whatever it touches but without any conscious signs." Surely in studying the influence of Christianity on the lives of women in Japan, there are many "conscious signs".

Two very notable services have been rendered by Christianity to womanhood in Japan.

I - Christianity in Japan has lent its weight toward emphasizing the worth of the individual, preeminently of women.

The social order in Japan has never rested on the inherent worth of the individual, male or female. A study of the influence of Oriental religions on women shows how woman's personality was ignored, even more than that of men. To one who has lived in the

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Saunders, Kenneth, Op. cit., p.125

Orient for the past twenty-five years, there could be no doubt that a very great change has come over Japan in its attitude toward women, and especially a great change in the Japanese woman's attitude toward herself and her daughters. It appears even yet that the Japanese woman gets just about as much for herself as she asks for, and even today she is asking for too little. If the individual woman needed only to think of herself, this might be excused as unselfishness, but, thinking of her daughters, and in turn of their daughters, she must realize that her much lauded unselfishness may be short-sighted and unfair.

It was through the education of woman that this new attitude was awakened. Through education, her personality and individuality have come to be recognized. With the opening of the country to foreign intercourse in the Meiji period, the education of both sexes was greatly encouraged. One of the first reforms that the Emperor Meiji promulgated was in the educational status of women. The first commission sent to America was especially instructed "to see how, in the lands they visit, women receive their education."

It was Christian influence that started practically all of the first schools for women. Miss Kawai says in "Japanese Women Speak":

Every book dealing with Christianity in Japan gives the major credit for girl's education to schools started by early missionaries. This historical fact never loses its value and romance. Christians should feel honest pride in pointing out to the world that all the prominent girl's schools here with a

history of forty or fifty years were founded by messengers of the Gospel. These schools have produced the majority of the women leaders in the present Japan. It is amazing to see what a large proportion of key women in any community doing worthwhile work are the products of these schools, even though they may not always be professing Christians. This is due to the fact that the Christian schools led in girl's education and that those who wished an all-around education found satisfaction here, rather than in the secular schools which are still in their infancy. Hereafter, however, many women leaders will come out of state or public schools, not because Christian schools have lost their prestige but because the public institutions can accomodate a greater number. There are a few private schools started and maintained by individual Christians, and it is a hopeful sign that their number is increasing. These schools may not all come under the category of Christian schools, but the Christian influence pervades them. Therefore, in spite of their small number, these private schools are looked up to by the community when it comes to character building. Moreover, many Christian teachers in public schools influence their students directly or indirectly. We should like to see many more schools established by Christian agencies.*

In 1927 there were under Christian auspices:

366 kindergartens with 12,603 pupils
 17 primary schools with 2,681 pupils
 81 middle schools for boys and girls with
 27,589 pupils
 24 colleges with 6,418 students
 90 miscellaneous schools with 6,701 students
 2 Christian universities

The total students taught in schools with Christian influence, was 55,992, in 578 institutions.

Miss Kawai's opinion is that of a Christian leader, though she was brought up in a home where the father was a Shinto priest. It is interesting, also, to hear what the foremost Buddhist

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Kawai, Michi, Japanese Women Speak, p.117

scholar in Japan, who is a professor in the Imperial University, has to say. Professor Anesaki in his "History of Japanese Religions" lauds the life and work of one of the first converts to Christianity, Paul Sawayama. Sawayama studied Christianity in America and then returned home and in 1876 started his ministry, after refusing a flattering official position. The church founded by him was an important one, and his influence is still felt in the number of self-supporting churches. Self-support was his great hope and aim for all churches, and it is for that first effort to make the Japanese church independent that he is best known. Dr. Anesaki points out that it was he, too, who was most influential in arousing his fellow Christians to found girls' high schools. He says:

Sawayama was prophetic in his pioneership in the education of women. His belief in the sanctity of the human soul induced him to see one of the greatest defects in Japanese life in the debasement of women. With this in view he aroused his fellow Christians to found girls' high schools, one in Osaka and another in Niigata. The man who most helped Sawayama and worked in these schools was Jinzo Naruse, his friend from childhood and his apostle in more than one respect. Naruse, in 1900, founded the Japan Women's College in face of opposition and obstacles. In this institution we can even today see Sawayama's spiritual heritage perpetuated, though the college is not denominationally Christian. Naruse inspired his college with a fervent spirit of religious faith, leaving free to every girl student her choice of adherence and her interpretation of the master's ideas.*

Even before this time many of the most prominent of the mission schools had opened their doors. Among the girls' schools which have celebrated their fiftieth anniversaries are Kobe College,

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Anesaki, Masaharu, History of Japanese Religion, p.346

Hiroshima Girl's School and Kwassui Girl's School at Nagasaki.

Kobe College

This beautiful girls' college has been "a burning torch to guide Japanese girls" since 1875. Here was opened the first department of household science. For over fifty years this school was set in the center of the city of Kobe, but now it has been rebuilt on a hilltop half-way between Kobe and Osaka. These beautiful new buildings are probably the most adequately equipped of any girls' school in Japan. The college now stands as the center of culture for all women in the kwansai district. A staff of some seventy-five teachers under the very able direction of Dr. Charlotte De Forest, who was born in Japan and knows the Japanese language well, plans for the students an education not unlike similar girls' schools in America. One very pleasing feature about this school is that the students may dress in either foreign or Japanese style, being encouraged to dress neatly but simply, but to make themselves as attractive as they can afford. They are thus prepared for the world which they must meet in a way that could not be possible with the government girls' high school graduates, who have lived for five years in their old-fashioned, dark blue serge middie uniforms. A girl is supposed to be able to wear the same garment throughout the whole school period. Many of the girls in mission schools have bobbed their hair, enjoying the freedom thereby gained years ago by western girl students. In the government girls' high school, this is not allowed, the girls wearing their hair twisted into a most

unbecoming knot at the back of the neck. The music department of Kobe College is noted all over Japan. Many wealthy families send their girls there especially for language study and music. There are over three thousand girls on the alumnae list, and hundreds of these women are wives of prominent officials, educators and pastors. Many people in Japan refer jokingly to Kobe College as a matrimonial bureau. Any Japanese man is proud to gain a wife from such a training school. "Many leading Christian and non-Christian business men in that district have refined and cultured homes, so different from those of ordinary wealthy families, because their wives are graduates of this college; and many alumnae members are prominent leaders in church, educational and social service."*

Doshisha Girls' School

An hour's ride by train from this school is another great mission school in Kyoto which has also graduated many women leaders--the Doshisha Girls' School. The government has shown its great appreciation of the work of this school in many ways. In 1925, the Empress herself visited it and attended chapel service. Miss Mary F. Denton, a truly famous American woman in Japan who has given fifty years of her life to this institution, was decorated by the Japanese government in appreciation of her services. The college buildings face the Palace gardens in the most beautiful section of the old capitol city. Girls of the best homes have come here to learn cooking, sewing, music, foreign languages,

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Kawai, Michi, Op. cit., p.84

as well as all the regular subjects required of high school and college women in Japan.

Hiroshima Girls' School

Another Christian mission school especially famous because of its founder is the Hiroshima Girls' School. Miss Nanni B. Gaines came out to Japan with Bishop Lambuth fifty-two years ago, and was sent to the Hiroshima district to work with women and children. She soon saw that the greatest thing that she could do for family life in this country district was to provide Christian education for girls. Without money or equipment she gathered nine girls in a loft and began the school which now is especially proud of its college department. Hundreds of Christian women have gone out from this school to be leaders in social and religious work. Miss Gaines, too, was honored by the Japanese government.

Kwassui Girls' School

The Kwassui Girls' School in Nagasaki was started, in like manner, by Miss Elizabeth Russell in 1879. She began with one student. Working in that school for over forty years she saw hundreds of graduates take their part in the movement which has changed attitudes toward women in Japan. She, also, was decorated for her service.

The Woman's Union Christian College

There are seven non-government college grade schools for girls in Japan. One of these, the Woman's Union Christian College

in Tokyo, is the youngest of the seven union sister colleges of the Orient, founded by the Woman's Foreign Mission Boards of America to offer opportunity for higher education for eastern women. The first president was the famous Quaker Christian leader, Dr. Inazo Nitobe. At present the president is Dr. Yasui, a woman noted for her position as a great educator and as a Christian leader. The college is in the suburbs of Tokyo and stands as a great educational and religious center for the Christian women leaders of the Kwanto district.

Tsuda College

Among the great private Christian schools, the best known are Miss Tsuda's College, Mrs. Hani's model experimental school and Miss Michi Kawai's new Fountain of Blessing School. Miss Ume Tsuda has been mentioned in former chapters as one of the girls sent to America early in the Meiji era to get western training. Tsuda College is quite unique in that it is not a government school, nor a sectarian school, but a strictly Christian institution in its own rights. Her graduates are scattered all over Japan, and many are in foreign countries as wives of prominent business men and officials. Graduates of this school are especially noted for their ability in using the English language. At the time of the great earthquake the school buildings were burned, but through the work of Miss Anna C. Hartshorne, a million yen was raised in the United States for its rebuilding. Who can fathom the influence of these high class Christian girls who

have gone out to be the wives and mothers of present-day Japan?

The Garden School of Freedom

Mrs. Moto Hani's private school, also in Tokyo, the Jiyu Ga-kuin (the Garden School of Freedom) is the school which at present is attracting more attention than any other girls' school in Japan. Mrs. Hani is a great leader both in Christian and non-Christian circles. She is the editor of the most popular woman's magazine in Japan. Her school always has a long waiting list of girls from every part of Japan, as Mrs. Hani accepts only a small group each year, limiting each class to forty. In 1932, she and her daughter went to the International Conference of New Education held at Nice, France, where all educators were much interested in her experiments. This is the model school in Japan for experiments in new educational ideas. At present the students do all the work in this school. Their education lies in working out principles of life and service from their own daily life and work. A recent exhibition held at the school consisted merely of products of their daily school life--health statistics, labor saving devices invented and improved upon by the students, clothing planned and made, painting, sculpture, musical composition, original inventions and other lines of creative work. Women's education in Japan will be vitally changed by such original and advanced ideas. In fact, other countries might well study this school for inspiration. A unique feature is that it is so thoroughly Christian.

The Fountain of Blessings School

In the suburbs of Tokyo is another experimental school--Miss Michi Kawai's Fountain of Blessings School. Of all the schools mentioned, it is probably the most completely Christian. Miss Kawai has done valiant work in the church and was for many years the national secretary of the Young Women's Christian Association in Japan. She felt that Japanese women themselves should be meeting the educational needs of their daughters in such schools as those which she and Mrs. Hani founded. Miss Kawai says of her own school:

The school emphasizes all-round Christian education. Christian living is not only taught in chapel and Bible class but in every part of daily school life. Window-cleaning is a practical lesson on the meaning of the transparency of the pure soul which sees God. Gardening is a good occasion for understanding his laws and nature. The training in discovering beauty in common objects, joy in manual labor, blessing in giving, and strength in loyal cooperation, are a vital part of religious education. Thus the school tries to have its whole atmosphere charged with a Christian spirit. The girls, also, are well imbued with the idea of international peace, so that they become the butt of severe criticism from their militaristic brothers. When nine hundred girls' high schools in Japan recently were offered opportunity to compete for prizes to be awarded by the Women's Peace Association, the girls of this school seized the opportunity and captured three out of the nine prizes. The purpose of the school from the beginning has been to make it a community center, so that all sorts of social activities will have their homes there. The program includes public lectures, a library, night school, seasonal school for people in rural districts, and preparation classes for women emigrants to Manchuria and South America where Japanese more and more will be making new homes. The school is only four years old and has now a little over a hundred girls with

seven full-time teachers, nine half-time Japanese teachers and two American instructors. When this school emerges into maturity, both in years and in results, it will help Christian women more constructively in order that they, too, can venture into something big in His name, without the initial backing of strong foreign organizations. Then the time will have come when this school can ask for a large share of cooperation with forces abroad, as well as at home.*

We are often warned against attributing things to Christianity that perhaps owe at least part of their life and inspiration to other forces. The point is well taken, for it is very easy for observers to generalize and draw conclusions too quickly, but surely in no field can the influence of Christianity be seen so clearly as in the education of girls in mission and private Christian girls' schools.

Another line in which Christian schools have led has been in giving women opportunities to act as principals, deans and heads of departments. Only one woman in Japan, teaching in government schools, has ever been elected to the principal's chair. All the inspectors of girls' schools were men until 1930. But Christian schools have consistently elected women to their head positions for many years. In one fourth of the Christian girls' high schools, the principals are women, and, in practically all of the schools, the dean and head teachers are women.

Miss Kawai asks that Christians abroad continue to help Japanese Christians in establishing girls' schools. She writes: "The Christian movement is more vital than ever before. Look at the small number of Christians, only one in two hundred of the

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Kawai, Michi, Op. cit., p.80

the population. They are constantly exposed to the dangers of materialism and scepticism. The untouched field will grow larger and more difficult unless help is at hand. Christians here need every encouragement and reenforcement from outside that can be given."* Nothing that any Japanese Christian or foreign Christian could do to raise the status of Japanese women could give surer and quicker results than come from Christian education.

How did the teaching in these early schools make such a rapid change in the girls' lives and attitudes? Miss Tsuda would give most credit to the spiritual training.

Japanese girls are capable, have good minds, and some of them are very talented. But, as a result of the old training, they lack self-confidence and initiative, and, above all, strength of will. Yet, to encourage these, as some would do, without the basis of religion and especially Christianity, and without the development of mind and the reasoning powers, brings in the greatest elements of danger. What is needed is the growth of the spiritual life, a real training of the understanding, moral teachings that fit the new conditions of life in modern Japan, and which would develop a realization of the possibilities that come with freedom--in a word, Christian education on higher lines.**

The personal influence of the first foreign teachers in the mission's girls' schools was one of the most potent forces in causing the girls to awaken to their own personality and worth. The schools were small, and the teachers and pupils lived intimately together and had a free interchange of ideas. The early graduates of these schools always speak of their close personal relationship with their foreign teachers and the superior quality for living and learning therein as being the greatest privileges

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Kawai, Michi, Op. cit., p.93

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De Forest, Charlotte, The Leaven in Japan, p.95

and assets of their school experience.

One of the first things the girls learned from the foreigners was the importance of health and well-cared-for bodies. According to Confucian discipline, Japanese girls and women were not supposed to have any physical feelings, and if they did, they were not expected to express them. Women's ills and pains are unimportant and should go unheeded. The stiff, set faces of women today mirror hours of hidden pain. The fact that a woman of forty years in Japan is considered an old woman and usually looks the part is evidence of these facts. Boys and men in Japan are quick to attend to their bodies, but women rarely see a doctor or take medicine. An interesting evidence of this was given by an American woman who lived for five years in a fine Japanese home in Texas. The father of this home is well educated and progressive. He is famous for the way in which he has developed a tract of eight thousand acres in Texas, making himself and many others very wealthy. He has a son and daughter who were born in Japan but came to America during their babyhood. The son was strong and healthy, but the daughter was not well, always unhappy and hard to understand. The woman referred to lived very intimately with the family, but was employed as a social worker among the French and Japanese workmen and their families. She knew the daughter very well and was worried over the girl's unhappiness. She mentioned to the father that the girl should be examined thoroughly at the hospital. He regarded the matter lightly and felt it unnecessary to take so much trouble for a girl. The

social worker finally insisted and gained the father's consent to take the girl to the hospital. There the physicians found her suffering from five major diseases. Upon reporting to the father, he still was not much exercised and insisted on waiting to see another doctor who had lived in this town some years before and who was likely to come again in a few months. He took such a slow easy course in meeting the situation that the girl lost her mind and had to be confined in a mental hospital. If this could happen in a modern Japanese home in America, one can imagine how much more easily it might have happened in Japan.

The Christian school taught the girls hygiene and arranged physical exercises and games. It was truly a new life for them. They had been taught to walk with eyes on the ground and to do nothing that would call attention to themselves by betraying any interest or even kindly feelings. Many foreigners have claimed that they could tell a mission school girl from the regular government school girl on the street, because she held up her head, walked freely and naturally and even smiled when meeting a friend. The freedom of expressing one's own personality and feelings was one of the first gifts of Christianity to Japanese women.

The mission schools were the first to advocate physical culture for women. Miss Margaret Forsythe, in her report on Japanese women for the Laymen's Missions Inquiry, says:

Twenty years ago the phrase, "physical culture for women" was frowned upon by the general public who feared it might ruin woman's feminine charm, but as soon as the school girls began to experience the pleasure which came from physical

exercise, the movement for physical culture grew. Big demonstrations of physical culture given at the athletic park in Meiji shrine area, athletic games held by various women's organizations and the international contest in which women participate today, are so common that no one questions their value. On the contrary, physical education for women is winning increasing appreciation from the public.*

Science, too, of course, has brought to Japan the fact that the next generation depends upon the health of the mothers. The girls' desires made preparation for the new knowledge which science has brought, and with the knowledge has come a pride in treating the girls of Japan as girls of other countries are treated. Knowledge and pride have united with the desires of the girls themselves to make possible the rapid changes in attitudes toward women.

Christians have been taught to fight disease among women and girls as well as among men and boys. Study of the statistics of Japan show that there is a very high death rate of infants and, also, of female adolescents from fourteen to twenty years of age. Health authorities attribute the high infant mortality to the mothers' lack of nourishment during pregnancy. The mortality among female adolescents is the highest of that of any civilized country in the world. Large numbers of high school girls die of tuberculosis and pleurisy before graduating. Large numbers also die of nobyō, a kind of brain fever brought on by hard study for which they are not physically equipped. Certain Japanese customs are very hard on women's health--the wearing of heavy inconvenient, germ-catching clothing; the habit of working in cold,

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Forsythe, Margaret, Laymen's Missions Inquiry, Vol. VI, p.301

draughty rooms, using only charcoal boxes for heating; sitting on the floor in a very tiring position; lifting heavy burdens and too frequent pregnancies. When Mrs. Sanger came to Japan and began the birth control movement, thousands of letters sent to the committee were a sad revelation of bad health conditions among women in Japan.

In the Christian kindergarten health work is begun, and in girls' schools of all grades, in church societies, and wherever Christian influence extends, health is stressed. Kagawa is spending much time in organizing Mutual Aid Sick Insurance and Medical Cooperatives, so that healing may be taken to villages where women and girls are still taught that they are not worth a doctor's fee.

Kagawa says that since Christianity came concubinage has been dying out. "I, myself", he writes, "am the son of a concubine. Now, not a single one of the Cabinet ministers keeps a concubine. Why? Because Christian teaching got the victory over the system of polygamy."

Prostitution, too, (as we have seen in a former chapter), has been attacked by Christian forces. Kagawa states, "Within the last three years, we have been victorious mostly by the efforts of Christians to pass bills for the gradual abolition of the licensed quarters in seven of the forty-six different prefectures and capitol districts. In still another province, Saitama Ken, the system was completely abolished and the prostitutes given their freedom at the end of last year. This effort for purity and life is a victory for Christianity."*

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Saunders, Kenneth, Whither Asia, p.125

greatest things which Christianity has done in Japan is to stir up a public consciousness on these questions. Every man lived unto himself with no regard for others so long as he kept the law. Heretofore there has been no such thing as public opinion.

Kagawa, in his conversations with Dr. Saunders, also said:

The divorce rate is decreasing. Forty years ago, out of every one thousand marriages there were four hundred and thirty divorces. Now, in 1932, there are only one hundred and seven as compared to two hundred in New York. Why? By reason of Christianity. This is one of the great victories of Christianity in Japan. Though its numbers are small, Christianity has one of the great victories of purity in home life to its credit.

In Japan children were not respected until Christianity came. We must reduce infant mortality and care for the children. We have so many associations now for the welfare of children imitating Christian institutions.*

Another tragic result of the lack of respect for life has been the large number of suicides. Since Christianity came, there has been greater care for would-be suicides and increasing prevention of this evil.

The idea of suicide in Japan is very different than in any other country. In America a suicide is usually caused by mental depression or illness, and generally a person who commits suicide is thought to be "not himself". In some cases, of course, suicide is committed to escape pain or punishment, or comes from distracted grief. This is also true in Japan, occasionally, but usually it is a sane act, a premeditated act. It is an honorable thing, the way out of an impossible situation. Japanese are completely fearless in the face of death, completely indifferent,

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Saunders, Kenneth, Op. cit., p.125

it would seem, to pain.

In recent years, suicides among women have increased. In thousands of cases a woman has gone to her death with the man she loved because she could not marry him. Mrs. Nogi killed herself alongside her husband, the famous general of Japan who committed hara-kiri when he heard of the death of his Emperor, Meiji. General Nogi was greatly honored, almost worshipped, for this act, and his wife was equally honored for hers. Many wives commit suicide when they are divorced. It is a very common thing for a woman to die by her own hands when her husband goes off to war so that he will never need to worry about her or try to come back to her, but will be able to throw himself into battle gladly, to die and go to the unknown land where his wife awaits him.

No story of what Christianity has done for women could make more clear the tragedy of the widespread custom of suicide and the need of meeting it than the work of Mrs. Nobu Jo of Kobe. Mrs. Jo has been a very remarkable Christian leader and temperance lecturer for the past forty years. She was the widow of a Methodist preacher. Left with a small child to support, she came to Kobe to hunt work. She became the housekeeper in a Christian old peoples' home. Moved by her big heart she rescued several unfortunate women who were cast out on the street. Because of this, the police began to bring homeless girls and women to her. Receiving a small gift of money from the United States, she went to Mt. Maya to pray for guidance in using it. She stayed on the mountain three days and nights, having a vision of a home for the

unfortunate girls and women of Kobe. She came down the mountain and asked her friends for pledges of money to help her open such a home. She has been very successful in this work. As she talked with these women, she was horrified to hear of the large number of cases of those who committed suicide on the Suma beach. This district is especially known as a place for suicides. It is a curious fact that in Japan people often choose a fashionable place for suicide. It is well known that young men and women go from all over Japan, and even from Shanghai and Manila and Hongkong to throw themselves into the crater of Aso or Asama, or to jump from the Kegon Waterfall at Nikko. Suma, a beautiful suburb of Kobe on the seashore, has long had a reputation as a suicide-pact spot. A factory girl first set the fashion here, and the papers wrote it up so luridly that a stream of people, one every day and often two, came to this spot to take their lives. The police were in despair. Mrs. Jo was so desperate about this that she consulted officials and Christian workers and finally put up a huge signboard reading, "Wait a minute--God is Love--if you feel that you must take your life, why not come and talk it over with Jo Nobu." The response to this sign was unbelievable. Not only those who went there to take their lives came to her, but hundreds of others who saw notices about the sign in the newspapers. Wives cast out by concubines came, girls running away from brothels to which they had been sold, children kidnapped by show men, women beaten by drunken husbands, wives displaced by jealous mothers-in-law, a girl brought by a repentant man who had bought

her to take care of him while he died of tuberculosis, girls hiding from the police, the wives and children of murderers, pick-pockets and thieves--all these came, and more. Since her sign was erected, over 5,000 girls have come to Mrs. Jo from that beach where they had gone to take their lives. Now, the sign has been copied and put up by welfare organizations other than Christian.

Kagawa speaks of the treatment of woman in the home. "Even today in Japan", he says, "women have small dishes and are allowed to eat very little. After Christianity came, respect for women grew astonishingly."* It is interesting to visit a Japanese Christian home and find the father, mother and children sitting down together to a happy meal. According to the old custom, father and the boys ate alone. Mother and the girls ate at any time when they had leisure, often times standing in the kitchen. They were not supposed to eat the better portions of the food. Children were not allowed to speak during mealtimes. In the Christian home all sit down at the table together and eat the same food at the same time. Mothers and daughters are gradually receiving the Christian courtesies which are extended to mothers and girls in Christian homes everywhere.

II - Christianity, in lending its weight toward emphasizing the worth of the individual through education and a new moral standard in home and public life, has awakened in women the desire and courage to go outside the home to work and to take their part in social and religious betterment.

In old Japan, after marriage, a woman of high class was

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Saunders, Kenneth, Op. cit., p.125

supposed to leave her home only on few occasions. At stated times she went to visit relatives and pay respects to certain persons, but for the most part she was supposed to be content with her household duties and family relationships. In old conservative cities, like Kyoto, many wives of advanced years have testified that they have never been outside their own gardens since marriage. Twenty-five years ago cultured women never went out to shop. All commodities were brought to the door in hand-carts, and the goods was laid out for the mistress's inspection. Very different are these days in Japan! Not only do women go out to shop freely, but the very clerks who wait upon them in the shops are, for the most part, girls and women.

The chapters, "Japanese Women in Industry" and "Japanese Women in Politics", outline the influx of women leaders into all sections of Japanese life. The Japanese woman has found her own capacity and strength. She need no longer be a parasite or submit to unjust treatment for the sake of her economic support. She has become a wage-earner, and she is an industrial asset in modern Japan.

Especially in the field of social work has the Japanese Christian woman found expression and opportunity. In the history of the fight against prostitution, the forces have been led by Christian women. All through Japan a large percentage of the welfare workers, the matrons of orphanages and of schools for the blind and deaf, welfare secretaries in factories, settlement workers and district nurses are Christian women. Even institutions

which are not Christian seek for Christian workers, finding that Christian women seem to have a different spirit and are able to dedicate themselves in a peculiar way to their work.

Figures are doubtless disappointing when studying the influence of Christianity on Japanese women. But the Japanese themselves do not feel so. Dr. J.S. Motoda, the former president of St. Paul's University in Tokyo, the author of many philosophical books, and lately Bishop of Tokyo, has expressed the general feeling thus:

Christianity in Japan may be compared to bamboo shoots. While still under ground, those shoots have extraordinary capacity for development and enrichment. With the coming of rain, they burst forth suddenly and grow with astonishing rapidity. The present period in the life of Japanese women is the period of unobtrusive development. The day of expansion will, in my judgment, come soon.*

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Motoda, J.S., Japan Speaks for Herself, p.81

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